



# Greetings from the Irish in Australia

An International Collaborative Project

By Kiera O'Toole and Dr Annemarie Murland

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We would like to thank the academics and artists for their support by contributing to this book. We would also like to thank Caelli Jo Brooker who dedicated her time, expertise and knowledge to designing this book. Lastly, we would like to extend our gratitude to our families for their support and love.



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## PREFACE

Greetings from the Irish in Australia:  
An international collaborative project

The concept for this book, Greetings from the Irish in Australia evolved from my Masters of Philosophy, (Fine Art) thesis entitled: Beyond the Pale Australia: The Studio as Site where Notions of Irish National Identity are translated into Contemporary Works of Art. This book serves as a snapshot of the enduring creative contribution by Irish migrants and their descendants who, through integral involvement in the formative development of nation, political activism, religious influence and cultural richness have significantly influenced Australian culture.

To assist and help develop this project I invited Dr Annemarie Murland, together with academics and individuals from the disciplines of the Creative Arts and Humanities from a range of tertiary institutions within Australia, to document notions of Irishness. Their collective contributions provide the content for the book that celebrates The Gathering, Ireland, 2013

Providing a platform to present old and new mechanisms for understanding Irishness within an Australian and global context is the work of Annemarie Murland, Gareth Jenkins and Allan

Chawner. Murland, who, although Scottish by birth, identifies with being Irish through her cultural heritage. Jenkins, who was born in the UK but after living in Ireland for 12 years considers himself to be an Irish resident. Chawner's story is emblematic of the Irish Australian narrative. Chawner's grandfather was an Irish immigrant, arriving in Australia in 1886 and Chawner, now an Irish citizen, is exploring his Irishness and to quote Chawner, 'my home that I have never been to'.

Moreover, there are the first generation of Irish migrants living in Australia whose stories are integral to the raison d'être of this undertaking. Fiona Doyle was born in Ireland but grew up in Western Australia; she states that she felt disorientated when she returned to live in Ireland when she was seventeen. Perry McIntyre, Dymphna Lonergan and Siobhan McHugh are all Irish migrants whose life work examines Irishness from afar. Finally, there is my story. I have lived in NSW for eight years but remain resolutely Irish in my sense of identity. Our collective stories offer a glimpse into the Irish in Australia in 2013 and my wish is this: to remind the Irish at 'home', that we are here, in Australia, writing, visualizing, and contributing to the Irish story.

## INTRODUCTION,

Greetings from the Irish in Australia:  
An international collaborative project

The Gathering: Greetings from the Irish in Australia is a celebration of Irishness through a global and cross-cultural lens. A holistic celebration of all things Irish that traverses notions of geographic and cultural limitations, is the premise for this book.

The objective of this project is to examine notions of Irishness and the minutiae of asserting an Irish identity or association when geographically disconnected from country. The methodology employed in developing the book is to invite professional artists, some who are academics in their own right, inspired thinkers and academics living in Australia to engage and respond to the proposition: What does Irishness mean whether at home or away? The content of the varied textual and visual contributions form an anthology that reflects a 'glocal' response to cultural Ireland, its history and legacy of mass migration.

As a form of anthropology, this book contributes to the shaping of brand Ireland through the formation of neo narratives that establish both physical and psychological reconnections with Ireland, across physical and psychological borders. The book and its contents showcase the creative nature of cultural Ireland's capacity to reimagine and celebrate the creative spirit that pulsates past and present Irish history.

The intention of the project is not to fetishize Irishness but to engage with the national and cultural psyche of the country, particularly in a time when Ireland is undergoing unprecedented political, social and economic change. Greetings from the Irish in Australia is a creatively innovative project that extends the connection of all things Irish towards a contemporary and discursive conversation in mediated space.

# FOREWARD

## The Gathering - Greetings from the Irish in Australia

*'The Gathering: Greetings from the Irish in Australia'* is a timely and welcome reflection on Ireland and the Irish in Australia; its thought-provoking approach offers a unique perspective on the often elusive concepts of 'Irishness' and indeed of 'home'. Great credit is due to Keira O'Toole and Dr Annemarie Murland for conceiving and realising this project, and of course, to all those who ably contributed to it.

The question posed, "What does Irishness mean whether at home or away?" is apt, one which has preoccupied many minds for many years, and which likely will continue to do so in years to come. Few would disagree with the central thesis that Ireland and Irishness have had an influence in the wider Australian community. Many would go further, claiming Irish influence in the various far-distant shores where the Irish diaspora has settled and called 'home'. Today over 70 million people around the world can claim Irish heritage, many of them are here in Australia.

So Ireland's diaspora has left its mark, and continues to do so, helping to shape the history, culture and politics of many countries. This is a truth which today confronts the new wave of Irish émigrés, in Australia and elsewhere, discovering that in these far-distant lands the imprint of Ireland is not a recent phenomenon, rather something more akin to a process stretching back over many years and, in the case of Australia, to the beginning of European settlement.

The Irish global family retains a deep attachment to its heritage and cherishes its living links with Ireland. This link is reflected too in Ireland's Constitution (*Bunreacht na hÉireann*), Article 2 of which declares that "...the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage." The plea in the preface of this work to be heard by the Irish at home is a heartfelt one which is both recognisable and understood.

As we leave our mark on the world around us, we acknowledge the impact of the world on us. The Irish spirit is an open one, open to the world, and enriched by it. Our brothers and sisters who have settled in Australia and elsewhere are changed by their lived experiences, which, in turn, are channeled back to our roots and reflected in our literary, music and artistic canon, our use of language, our approach to life - universal themes through an Irish lens.

This year, 2013, we are celebrating the year of 'The Gathering'. We have invited the Irish abroad to come home. This invitation is inclusive; it embraces all those who feel Irish or who feel an affinity for Ireland. They are invited to come home to celebrate all that is special about Ireland. This is a moment of reflection; one which prompts pause for thought; one into which Keira O'Toole's work fits nicely and appropriately.

I welcome this work and I congratulate all those involved in bringing it about. It is an important contribution to our understanding of Ireland, of 'Irishness' and the Ireland's links with Australia. Doubtless we will continue to discuss, to debate and even, occasionally, to agree to disagree when we come to reflect on our Irishness. Be that as it may, the business of thought and reflection situates us in the world, enhances our sense of self, of the world around us. *'The Gathering - Greetings from the Irish in Australia'* is a good point of reference; a good place to start.



**Noel White**  
Ambassador of Ireland  
Canberra  
October 2013

## CHAPTER ONE

# BEYOND THE PALE: AUSTRALIA

**Kiera O'Toole**

My current art practice and research revolves around the measurement of the presence of self that is troubled by a sense of loss and absence attached to the felt experience of migration. The exhibition titled *Beyond the Pale: Australia* examines the emotional and political landscape of Irish national identity politics from an engendered migrant perspective. A trilogy of sculptural and drawing installations: *Our Lady of Currach*, *Inimireach* (Immigrant), and *Greetings from the Irish in Australia* spatially enact the cruciform that is embedded with a series of complex signs and symbols, reflecting mother Ireland's cultural history and identity.

As a form of visual exchange the works of art transfer a particular sense of Irishness through the strategic application of traditional Irish motifs that

attach a sense of place within the art object. As a visual leitmotif, the traditional Irish boat, the Currach, functions as a discordant cultural reference that frames and conceptually underpins the exhibition.

Drawing as a method of analyzing multiple strata of knowledge and felt experience articulates a deeply emotive, sensual and gestural response to the interstices between personal, cultural, national and diasporic identities. Working across disciplines I relocate charcoal drawings, appropriated from the exhibition, into sculptural works of art. As a process and methodology, the dematerializing of one work provides the space for other works to emerge. This transitory nature of this way of working ensures the evolution of the work; always in a state of flux the work records my interiority.

My work expands the field of drawing by pushing the boundaries of surface through employing materials embedded with narrative. Masking tape, a commonly discarded material, becomes the surface for my works. The tape functions as a binder to wrap and fix things, however, through practice and process of drawing the materials invert to conceptually form a dichotomy. Unpacking is the resulting metaphor, which uncovers and unmask my relationship to Irishness and the diaspora that has impacted the cultural psyche of the country. The dense layering of materials and media converge creating indecipherable imagery that acts as a mnemonic repository for a developing sense of Irishness in Irish/Australian contexts.





**Kiera O'Toole**

PREVIOUS PAGE

*An Gorta Mor agus Anseo* (detail),  
charcoal, graphite on masking tape.  
dimensions variable, 2011

*Our Lady of Currach* (detail),  
balsawood, gold leaf, canvas,  
acrylic paint.  
dimensions variable, 2012

*Our Lady of Currach* (detail),  
balsawood, gold leaf, canvas,  
acrylic paint.  
dimensions variable, 2012

*Inimireach (Immigrant)*, 1 of 32  
balsa wood, acrylic paint,  
Australian native bush nuts,  
seaweed root.  
dimensions variable, 2012

## CHAPTER TWO

# THE SELKIE

**Annemarie Murland**

**Annemarie Murland**  
*The Selkie (detail)*  
diptych, mixed media on paper  
on board and poem  
140cm x 110cm, 2012



He loves her with dark eyes. She knows that in the fractured frame of a door closed shut, where rests her skin in homage to a life long lost. Selkie mistress meditates silent vespers towards the gentile island whose gaze is wide so, that she cannot swim over. And as sunlit ice breaks over waters edge, her eyes caste downward. Her season has arrived.

Close to the lips of wake, she sighs; Atlantis no more echo's her coainadh. Lamenting loss sounds over the Minch as dark eyes dart beneath surfaces wet in faith, tell nothing but silence in the abyss where she waits the dulse music that is her call to mate.

Bodhran beats of wave gently lap against her skin, where docking love leaves her bare and open like the Minch that separates her from her ain. Swollen she rises to dive beneath waters dark that penetrate pillows of pleasure. Bottomless and waterlogged she wavers for her centre, the sea.





Rank smells fill the air and her waters petrify through stone and heart to the place, memory, which rests in still silence to stroke her hide in sleep. In drowning love, detritus, shame recovers in the sunken salt water of mother's tears that flow freely down skint pelt that hangs beyond fractured door, unopened.

Beyond the season she arrives where it began, the Minch, her lover wide and deep lays sound in ground without skin of comfort. Delivered, her freedom is wet as sound attached to mother tongue she enters waters edge of blue swell recoiling not the call of the sea. Her coainadh wakes.

Coainadh: Keening: A Gaelic term to describe loss through a lament.

Minch: A stretch of water, Scottish term.

Bodhran: A traditional Celtic Drum

Ain: Belonging to her



**Annemarie Murland**  
*The Selkie* (detail)  
diptych, mixed media on paper  
on board and poem  
140cm x 110cm, 2012

## CHAPTER THREE

# A DUBLINER'S DIASPORA

**Siobhan McHugh**

I grew up in Dublin in the 1960s, the second of six children. I didn't realise it at the time, but my parents were the first generation to come of age in modern post-colonial Ireland.

My father was born in 1923, a year after the Dáil (Irish parliament) accepted by 64 votes to 57 the Treaty with England that set up the 26 counties of the Free State, triggering civil war. That war ended three months before my father's birth, and that same year, the Free State granted the vote to all adult women—five years earlier than Britain and Northern Ireland would. What a pivotal generation! One can only imagine the hopes invested in them, after centuries of British rule and so many failed insurrections. Yes, the North remained apart, but by the time my mother was born in 1927, the South was in relatively good shape.

Education was our strength and my parents were among those who benefited. Each came first in Ireland in the Leaving Certificate exams in their respective years. Though my father always pointed out, with

seeming lack of irony, that he had in fact got 110 per cent for Maths—he got an extra 10 per cent for doing the exam through the Irish language. He did a commerce degree and went straight into the civil service, in the Department of Finance, where he worked closely with the architect of expansion, Ken Whitaker, who opened up the country to international investment in the '50s and '60s. My mother also won a scholarship to university, but there was no question of her taking it. She had three brothers and younger siblings, and nobody was going to waste a tertiary education on a girl. As she bided the time before marriage as a clerk in the Post Office, her thirst for knowledge lay quiescent, to burst forth with a vengeance in a determination to see her children—five of them girls—get the opportunities she had been denied.

Oddly, the thing I remember least about my childhood was a sense of cultural belonging. Both my parents came from rural backgrounds: my father from a small holding in Cavan, on the border with Fermanagh, and my mother from, variously, Cork, Clare and Kilkenny, as her father moved around on police postings. Growing up on a sterile housing estate in South Dublin, I was one of many de-racinated Irish. They said that at least a third of Dubliners in those days originated from outside Dublin. When anyone asked me where I came from, I usually said 'the 11 bus terminus'. That was about as cultural as my roots got.

I had a reasonable grasp of the Irish language (Gaelic), for a Dub, but I never felt authentic enough to use it around REAL Irish speakers. They had the blas, the genuine accent, whereas mine was only learned Irish, and imperfect at that. I had no problem trying out my hesitant French or German when backpacking in Europe. I didn't mind if I made a mistake there; most people were happy you made the effort, and usually got your drift anyway. But to show my limited vocabulary

in my own country brought a sense of shame, about not qualifying, somehow, as properly Irish. On a return visit a decade after I'd emigrated to Australia, I found myself waiting for a friend in a pub in the Irish-speaking town of Spiddal, outside Galway. An old man on the stool next to me enquired in a friendly manner, 'cad as duit?' 'Where are you from?' Without thinking, I answered 'As Bl'Átha Cliath, ach tá mé im' chónaí san Astráil.' ('From Dublin, but I live in Australia'). We chatted away, the words coming to me surprisingly easily. It was the first time I'd ever had a spontaneous conversation in Irish. My emigrant status had somehow liberated me from my fear of not passing muster.

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*Our writers told us much more about ourselves than anything we studied in history.*

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The Ireland of my schooldays—the late '60s and early '70s—saw massive social change: the folk music revival, from the Clancy Brothers to the Chieftains; battles for civil rights and contraception; the fall out from Vatican 11; the advent of the Pill.... I know this, because I made a lengthy radio series about it, in 1984. But at the time, it was not my Ireland. My Ireland was a narrow suburban existence, an aspirational middle-class family stranded between city and country, between the confident cosmopolitanism of the doctors, lawyers and scholars, the hard, gutsy 'gurriers' and 'knackers' of the Dublin docks and tenements, and the despised 'culchies' of agricultural origin who were sometimes spied around Wynn's Hotel in Abbey Street, up from their sodden boreens for a medical appointment, or the annual shopping day on 8 December: Feast Day of the Immaculate Conception and a welcome day off school.

If Protestants missed out on the many saints' days we observed, I didn't notice it. I only knew one Protestant family, the Moffats, two doors up. Mrs Moffat reminds me of the Patrick Kavanagh line: 'tall hard as a

Protestant spire.' A self-appointed litter warden, she could often be seen out in the big field opposite our house, stooping to retrieve ice-pop sticks and silvery chocolate wrappers. We put it down to her Protestant cleanliness. You could tell a Protestant by their names—'Heather' or 'Graham' was a dead giveaway—and they mostly lived in the better parts of Dublin, like Sandymount. When I went back to Dublin years later with my two young sons, we visited all the important places, from the 2,000 years old preserved bog men in the National Museum to the stone yard in Kilmainham Jail where the 1916 leaders were executed. Among the sights,

I proudly pointed out the playing field near Ranelagh where my hockey team trounced the Proddo Diocesan girls 22-0—four goals of which, I explained, were my own personal redress for the Battle of the Boyne.

Our writers told us much more about ourselves than anything we studied in history. I loved the short stories of Seán O'Faoláin and Frank O'Connor, their sometimes funny, sometimes brutal depictions of family and community at once familiar and foreign. Yeats was grand and mystical, sending us to the dictionary for phrases like 'pern in a gyre', yet other lines remain embedded in my mind: 'an aged man is but a paltry thing, a ragged cloak upon a stick, lest soul clap its hands and sing.' The famously cranky Patrick Kavanagh, my mother's favourite, honoured the humanity, in all its pettiness and heroism, of those who inhabited his stony grey fields of Monaghan.

No-one showcased the Irish, and especially Dublin, better than Joyce of course. I first read Ulysses at the age of 16. Not because I was a precocious scholar, but

because I was marooned in a Breton farmhouse as an au pair for two months, drowning in dimly understood French, and it was the only English language book there, a bulwark against loneliness. I didn't know its fearsome reputation; the opening, set at the Martello Tower in Sandycove where I swam on long summer evenings, sucked me in, and the idiom evoked such nostalgia, I persevered. Dublin was framed in such detail, I could suddenly see the whole rich spectacle of it. I think it was my first conscious detachment from BEING Irish to seeing what Irishness was.

It's no surprise to me that Joyce consciously chose exile while brilliantly evoking his homeland – for it is only when you leave Ireland that Irishness is reflected back at you. As a barmaid in London in the IRA bombing summer of 1974, I watched as customers' faces changed, once my accent established my origins. I understood their hostility, but was shocked by the palpable prejudice. For the first time, I considered what it might be like to be black, and get this force-field of antipathy everywhere you went. At least I could sit on a train or a bench undisturbed; I blended in till I opened my mouth. No such reprieve for black people. Overseas, I also noticed my own otherness. In New York, at the end of a long student vacation that had taken me all round the US, I joined the queue for Aer Lingus flights to Dublin, exulting in the tumult of square chins, freckled faces and laughing banter. I hadn't realised I'd miss my mob.

Politics was another instant divide. Most of the country in my youth was Fianna Fáil or Fine Gael, attachments that went back to the Civil War. To this day I don't know how my parents voted. It was one of the few family reticences. Though I'd like to be able to lay claim to romantic rebel genes, in fact, like many Irish, I had a paternal grandfather who fought in the British Army in World War One. He returned, shellshocked,

to sit for hours alone in a dark farmhouse shed. My mother was less of a political dark horse. I only heard her praise two politicians: Donogh O'Malley, the young Education Minister who brought in free secondary education in the '60s; and the other Dr Noel Browne, the Clann na Poblachta (Republican Family) Minister for Health who is remembered for two things: the eradication of TB, and the valiant attempt to introduce a Mother And Child scheme that would have given free medical care to all mothers and their children. But the Catholic Church effectively ran the hospitals and schools. This plan would undermine their power and perhaps even, said Catholic Archbishop John McQuaid, lead to abortion and birth control.

The Church of Ireland was no more enthusiastic, describing the scheme as a 'communistic' interference in the family. Even Noel Browne's own party leader, Seán McBride, son of Yeats' great thwarted love, Maud Gonne, and the founder of Amnesty International, opposed the plan. Browne had to resign in 1951, the year my parents married. Had there been such universal healthcare, it might have enabled my mother to leave a disastrous marriage much sooner than she did. Trapped by economic dependence, with no refuges, no property rights for married women, and anyway no divorce, she waited 29 years, till the youngest started high school, before getting a separation. Noel Browne remained her hero.

'The North' was never discussed in our house. 30 January 1972 was my political awakening. I opened the paper to see 13 faces staring back—all of them of people shot by British paratroopers in Derry, on Bloody Sunday. All were unarmed. Seven were teenagers. I was then 14. As I read the sickening details of their desperate attempts to flee—five were shot in the back—I started to cry. When British Home Secretary Reginald Maudling said in

parliament that the British army had acted out of self-defence, Bernadette Devlin, Ireland's youngest Westminster MP, jumped up and slapped him in the face. I cheered. I suspect most of the country did.

But I never had a signed-up position on Northern Ireland, unlike my more radical friends, who tended to be either Trotskyist supporters of the Provos (the Provisional IRA) or International Socialists with contempt for a nationalist agenda, and supporters of the Stickies, as Official Sinn Féin (later Sinn Féin The Workers Party) was known. I oscillated between the two, unable to commit to armed intervention, but reluctant to let go of the national sense of grievance, the abhorrence of British injustice towards the Irish.

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*The full force of the tradition—our tradition—hit me at last, as I saw how musicians and singers and listeners came together in the shared yearning of a lament...*

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Even at social gatherings, your version of Irishness was easily detected once the singing started. Would it be it a sean-nós (old tradition) song, in Gaelic, derived from Connemara, Donegal, or the thickets of native Irish speakers in Cork, Kerry, Mayo and Waterford? A proselytising republican anthem like Four Green Fields? A Respectable parlour song from Thomas Moore? A sentimental option, like The Rose of Tralee or I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen? An extended narrative like Percy French 's Ballyjamesduff or The Mountains of Mourne? A revivalist ballad about the Raggle-taggle Gypsy or Arthur McBride? A blistering Luke Kelly indictment of power or a rollicking Ronnie Drew story of drink and mayhem? So many versions of Irishness to choose from.

Music was strangely absent from my home—particularly as we could all sing and my father's family included talented pianists, one of whom, Hugh Tinney, had

an international career. But I finally discovered Irish traditional music in the wild – those careening transporting sessions that would erupt from time to time in the poky back room of some ordinary pub. My epiphany came in 1977 when I moved to Galway and heard a tormented fiddle player whose name, I kid you not, was Mickey Finn. I had only come down for the weekend but I didn't return to Dublin for a month, entranced by the power of the playing, and how it touched something I hadn't known was in me. I arrived with somewhat superior Dublin notions. I was never the 'West Brit' someone accused me of being— my crime was to have used garlic in mashed potato, a vile treachery—but I had turned my face to Europe and the world, disdaining the vibrant, earthy Ireland beyond the Pale. One year in Galway changed that forever.

The full force of the tradition—our tradition—hit me at last, as I saw how musicians and singers and listeners came together in the shared yearning of a lament, heard the centuries of custodianship in the faithful playing of old tunes, without trickery or artifice or one-upmanship, and occasionally was privy to those most magic of moments when a musician threw himself off the ravine and soared to rapturous heights, the playing possessed, beyond the possible. I recall thrilling moments like that with the fiddler Tommy Peoples in Clare, or the synergistic passion of box player Jackie Daly with fiddler Seamus Creagh, or more recently, the transcendental fiddle-playing of Clareman Martin Hayes. I introduced Martin at a concert in Sydney once, whetting the audience's appetite with a list of his many accolades. The next night, he took me aside and asked me not to mention his achievements. I apologised, asked if I'd

inadvertently embarrassed him. He softly explained: 'no, it's just that I wouldn't know if I was going to be any good until I started playing.' It was a hugely revealing insight into the creative mind – despite the fact that he has won every award going in his field, he takes absolutely nothing for granted. Every time he picks up the fiddle it's an act of faith, and hope, and humility.

At the age of 27, I left Ireland, because I had fallen foul of the Catholic Church, an institution that effectively ran the country. The 'special place' of the Catholic Church was removed from the Irish constitution in 1973, the year I left school, but the Church's clout was still in place ten years later, when a constitutional amendment around abortion was mooted. Not to make it legal; to make it more illegal than it already was. The country was bitterly divided. As producer of a popular breakfast show, I sought to canvass the issues in a balanced way. I would have an extended interview with the founder of a family planning clinic on one day, and a Right to Life campaigner

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*...Australia has shown me how to nurture what for me is the best part of Irishness: the refusal to condone oppression...*

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the next. The guests were approved by my head of unit—but within three hours of the broadcast of the interview with the family planning woman, I had been removed from my position. Worse, my manager now denied having given approval. I heard later that influential Catholics had acted to have me removed.

This was censorship at its most blatant—the intervention of the church in matters of state. Yet the journalists' union wasn't in the slightest bit interested, being more concerned with power games around Northern Ireland politics and the 'Stickies' and 'Provos'

in their ranks. Being neither, I had no support base, and was left to languish as producer of a late night country music show. With my days free, I was co-opted as Honorary Secretary of the 'Australia and Ireland 1788-1988' Conference in Kilkenny. I knew nothing about Australia beforehand, but by October 1983, when the conference was held, I'd become sufficiently intrigued to attend. It was opened by Senator Susan Ryan, then a Minister for State in the Hawke Labor government. Her confident, slightly provocative, air was a refreshing change from the lugubrious male politicians who ran Ireland. She spoke of the 'formative, dynamic and all-permeating' contribution of the Irish in Australia, and their links to the Labor movement, to Australia's intellectual and economic growth, to an indigenous Australian culture and to the fight for political and economic justice for Australia's Aboriginal people. Late night songs and debates around the piano with the poet and pundit Vincent Buckley and the critic and stirrer Dinny O'Hearn increased my interest in a country that had previously to me been off the radar.

Thus, in March 1985 I landed in Sydney. With a few months on for bad behavior, it's almost exactly half a lifetime ago. From the very first days, I felt both at home, reassured by the similarities, and in a strange land, enlivened and intrigued by the differences.

There's lots I miss about Ireland. Family and friends, of course. A certain kind of cheekiness you don't get anywhere else. Long June evenings when time seems suspended. The familiar delight of favourite places: a walk around Merrion Square and on to the canal and Baggot Street Bridge, the fields of West Clare

and the Cliffs of Moher, still breath-taking despite the predations of tourist coaches, the grey stone of Galway and the rush of the Corrib at the Salmon Weir Bridge and out past Claddagh. I miss the music, terribly. I miss the wit, and the labyrinthine stories we tell, at bus stops, in shops, in pubs. I miss all the memories that shaped me, and the people who bore witness to them.

But I am pledged to Australia now. I prefer to live in a country where we still mythologise the fair go as the basis of society. Where we disdain showiness and tall poppies. Where reasonable state schools, excellent selective schools and diverse independent schools still give anyone a good chance to get ahead. Where racism is at least outlawed and multiculturalism mandated. Where anyone can get free basic healthcare. Where no-one toadies to a doctor or lawyer, and a plumber, a teacher and a stockbroker can live cordially alongside, as in the street where I live. Where a wide range of attitudes are tolerated, and church and state are separate. All attributes of Australia that the Irish helped to shape.

Of course there's lots not perfect here. Attitudes to asylum seekers and Indigenous people continue to disappoint. But on balance, Australia has shown me how to nurture what for me is the best part of Irishness: the refusal to condone oppression.

We carry that with us wherever we go, embedded in the cultural DNA. Those who are far from being firebrands, those who espouse the establishment and even those Irish who show up in the annals of authoritarianism: they too are shaped by the concept, even if only in opposition to it. Whatever hue of Irish we may be, whether Irish Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Church of Ireland, whether atheist, socialist, anarchist, traditionalist, whether Irish-speaking or not,

whether singing a Clancy Brothers ballad, a Planxty air, or an Americanised Galway Bay, the passion for social justice will, I hope, always be, Brand Irish.

There's room for us all under that umbrella.

For as the poet Louis McNeice said – himself the Belfast-born son of a Church of Ireland minister, and an Irishman who spent much of his life in England, but never lost sight of his Irishness:

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*'World is crazier  
and more of it than we think  
Incorrigibly plural.'*

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## CHAPTER FOUR

# Born again in Ireland

Allan Chawner

My grandfather was an Irish immigrant; arriving in Australia in 1886 at 19. I was able to claim Irish citizenship through him. I was put on the register of births and then I applied for a passport.

I had never been to Ireland. So with thoughts of lands that somehow I belonged to, I returned to Ireland.

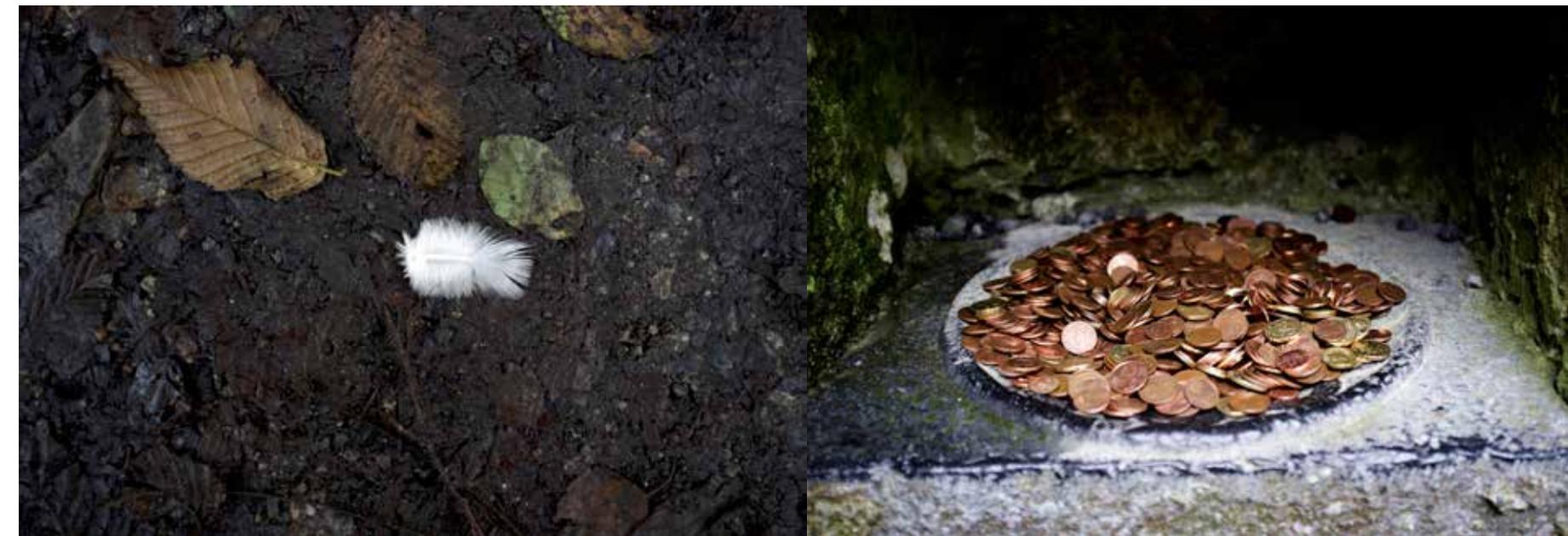
I am no writer. I am a photographer.

My story is not illustrated with pictures.

My story is the sight of a place, that is both familiar and exotic. My home that I have never been to.

A dream of place in photographs.

Allan Chawner  
*Born Into Ireland* (series)  
photomedia





## CHAPTER FIVE

### Ob.jec.ti.fy

**Gareth Jenkins**

What is in a line?

My recent work is concerned with the reduction of concept in my paintings. In the past my work was developed from urban culture, man made structures, the walls and spaces that went into the make up of the architectonic environment. Perhaps to the viewer they still echo these concepts but to me it has become less about where it came from and more about what it is and how it is.

Recently, through my work I have demonstrated how line in its simplest form can be used to convey a sense of the object while asserting spatial structure within a non-figurative format. From this perspective I try to control the paint's natural need to flow and continue to create paintings that discuss the almost impossible task of creating sharp edged lines out of a liquid substance. In other words, how does a line behave within a given space using a liquid material to create hard-edged lines that fall in and out of the painting's frame?

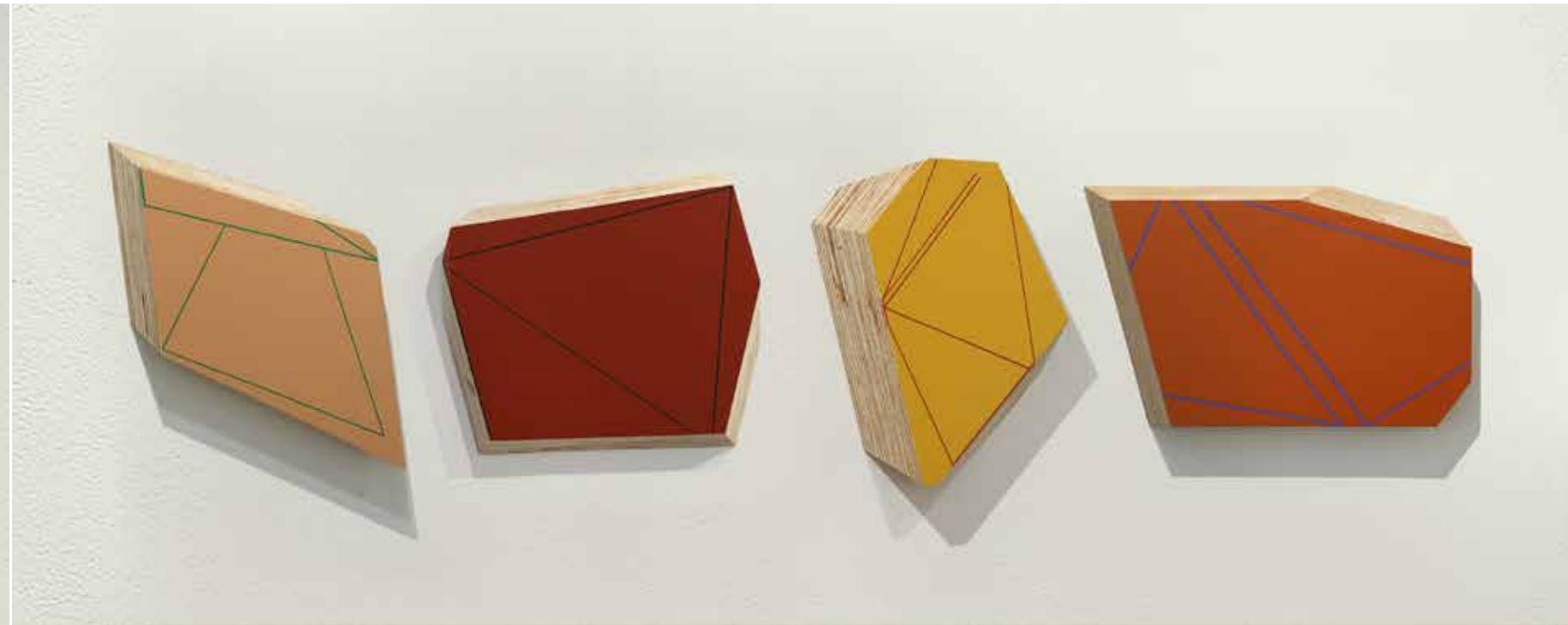
The concerns in my current practice have developed from the precious time I spent working as an artist in Ireland. Based in the midlands I was lucky to have the support of my family and local community, which gave me the time and space I needed to develop my practice.

I re-entered third level education as a mature art student studying at undergraduate level in the Limerick School of Art and Design in 2004 where I was lucky to study alongside like minded art students in the painting department. After a successful four years in Limerick I moved on to study at postgraduate level on the MFA course at the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, which I completed in 2010. In this time I have considered myself fortunate to meet so many art industry professionals that have helped guide my practice and career, which I am forever grateful for.

Since leaving Art education I have been represented by the Cross Gallery in Dublin and more recently the Nag gallery also in Dublin, which has helped to give my work an audience and continue an important dialogue between what I do as an artist here in Australia and how it is perceived in Ireland.

Since moving to Darwin, Australia I have started to build on new relationships and networks within the arts community and have had a number of successful exhibitions. A day doesn't pass where I am not thinking about the Ireland I left behind, a place that helped me to grow as both an artist and an individual, a place I can definitely call home.





**Gareth Jenkins**

PREVIOUS PAGE

*#260026*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
18.5cm x 10cm, 2013

PREVIOUS PAGE

*#558000*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
19.5cm x 14cm, 2013

*#D4E3FF*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
20cm x 14cm, 2013

*#FFB489*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
24.5cm x 14cm, 2013

*#B90000*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
21.5cm x 16.5cm, 2013

*#FFCF35*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
15cm x 10cm, 2013

*#E4601D*

acrylic on veneered plywood  
23cm x 12.5cm, 2013

## CHAPTER SIX

### Why commemorate An Gorta Mor in Sydney in 2013?

## The Memorial and Remembering

**Perry McIntyre**

It may seem strange to build a monument, which remembers an event that happened more than 19,000 kilometres away, 168 years ago. However, the Irish connections to Australia have always been considerable since the early convict days. At present, the memory of the mid-nineteenth century Famine in Ireland is being re-visited by historians and local communities, not only in Ireland, but throughout the world and this has reinvigorated an interest in Australia's Irish emigrants. As we know, the Famine was an event, which precipitated and accelerated waves of emigration to North America and Australia. The numbers, which came to the Australian colonies, added a significant number of Irish people to the growing free-settler population

but these numbers were small in terms of absolute numbers who fled from Ireland. The numbers of people who 'just left' in any way they could are difficult to calculate but Earl Grey's workhouse orphans are one group of Famine survivors who can not only be counted but specifically named and pinpointed to their place of origin in Ireland as well as to their immigrant destination. These are the 4,114 female orphan young women who were given assisted passages from the workhouses in Ireland to three Australian colonies in the years 1848 to 1850 and were the inspiration for the building of the Memorial to the Great Irish Famine in Sydney.

The Australian Monument to The Great Irish Famine, named as such at the unveiling, stands at Hyde Park Barracks, opposite the Supreme Court at the top of Macquarie Street, Sydney in the middle of the heart of the professional, legal and political centre of the city. It is incorporated into the wall, which offered protection for single immigrant women, beginning with the first shipload of workhouse orphans who arrived on the Earl Grey on 6 October 1848. This is a memorial to the Famine itself but it is also a commemorative reminder of a survivor group of young women and, by extension, a memorial for all emigrants, particularly refugees. Ironically the memorial stands on the site of the original kitchens of the building that began its life as a convict barrack in 1819. While the memory of the Famine in Ireland may have long lingered in the psyche of the Irish people, it was barely recognised by the broader public until the sesqui-centenary approached in the 1990s and it was certainly not celebrated. Rather it was a horror to be forgotten or recalled only in the shame of the survivors and their descendants who remained in Ireland.

Stories were sometimes told but there was little examination by historians until the publication of *The Great Hunger* by Cecil Woodham-Smith in 1962.

During the 1990s memorials began to be built all over Ireland and publications on varied aspects of the Famine also began to emerge: titles relating specifically to aspects of the Famine, ranging from Christine Kinealy's comprehensive (1994) book, *This Great Calamity*, which gives an overview of the Famine as well as focusing on particular aspects, such as the background to the *Phytophthora infestans* blight itself and the consequences; Austin Burke's, *The Visitation of God*, deals exclusively with the potato. Small pamphlets such as Breege McCusker's *Lowtherstown Workhouse* and other location-specific examinations abound – they are written by academics, interested local people and descendants of survivors who fled to what is now referred to as 'the Irish diaspora'.

One only need to walk into any bookshop or newsagency in villages throughout Ireland to find overview academic works and local stories relating to the Famine, even a number of novels, including some for children, are now based on these dark times of Irish history. A book recently published in Ireland, *The Atlas of the Great Irish Famine* is a mammoth contribution to the history of the Famine. In a review in *The Irish Times*, historian Kevin Whelan noted that:

It is incorrect to describe this event as the Irish Famine; it is more accurately the British famine, occurring within the United Kingdom. And if we adopted the term the British famine, it would encourage us to think harder about how surprising

it was that famine should sweep so unhindered through the most powerful state on the planet. Its utterly astonishing geopolitical location is ultimately what distinguishes the Great Famine in Ireland from modern famines, which occur in more marginal economies. A contemporary equivalent might be famine in the American heartland, such as Iowa or Nebraska. While we still call it the Irish Famine, we adopt too narrow a perspective.

I recommend this *Atlas of the Great Irish Famine* to you and flag its Australian launch at the State Library of NSW on Thursday evening 22 August 2013, which commenced at the International Famine Commemoration in Sydney.



Image: Jim and Caitriona.

## Memorials

One of the first initiatives to memorialise the Famine in Ireland was the East Clare Heritage Famine Memorial Park at Tuamgraney which grew from the efforts of the East Clare Heritage group formed in 1989 as a subsidiary of the Government initiated 'Integrated Rural Development Programme' to remember 150 years since the Famine. The park was opened in 1997. On the road between Ennistymon and Lahinch, also in Clare on the site of a former workhouse is a large, striking monument depicting a small child, Michael Lynch of Lahinch, knocking on the huge door of the workhouse. A quote from the Poor Law Guardians notes the death of his parents and that 'the child in question is now at the workhouse gate expecting to be admitted if not he will starve'. In Sligo Town a memorial depicting a destitute family was also erected in 1997 in the car park opposite the Harp Tavern in Quay Street.

The Irish National Monument at Murrisk at the foot of Croagh Patrick in Mayo was built 'to honour the memory of all who died, suffered and emigrated due to the Great Famine of 1845-1850, and the victims of all famines'. It was unveiled by the President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, on 20 July 1997. In St Stephen's Green, Dublin, there are two famine sculptures including one by Edward Delaney just inside the Green on the corner opposite the Shelbourne Hotel. The Rowan Gillespie famine figures on Custom's House Quay (1997) are now more widely known because the financial sector of Dublin has grown in this booming new 'docklands' area. An interesting aside here is that this modern development also houses Georges Quay from which young single female

emigrants boarded vessels bound for New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land in the 1830s.

All over Ireland lonely cemeteries testify to the Famine dead—they lie in corners of traditional graveyards, in their own 'Famine Graveyards' some of which were attached to workhouses and some are remembered in isolated graves or pits by the roadsides. These, too, are being signposted as part of the tourist routes.

In Australia visitors from the Commemoration Department of the Irish Government and historians from across the country began to give seminars and lectures in the 1990s and the Famine Museum opened at Strokestown Park, County Roscommon. This was first of a considerable number of Famine Museums and displays now around the country, and is by far the largest and most comprehensive. It includes the historic house and gardens as well as the extensive display, which covers the local impact of the Famine as well as showing broader national and political interpretations.

In March 1995 President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, visited Sydney. Her strong commitment to human rights and her concern and compassion for victims of the Famine endeared her to many, particularly the Irish-Australian community. She called on this group of modern Irish immigrants to mark the memory of The Great Famine in some special way, just as she had done at Grosse Isle that same year where she said that Commemoration of the Famine was a moral act and that dark time had been a part of the shaping of the sense of identity of the Irish people.

Tom Power from Clonmel, Tipperary, was at that time Chairman of the Tipperary Association in Sydney. He and a group of like-minded Irish-born Australians were inspired by Mary Robinson's call to remember the Famine and with the help of many supporters they formed a committee to fund-raise, select a statue (the thought at the time) and a place to erect it. Richard O'Brien, then the Irish Ambassador to Australia, had an understanding of commemorating the Famine that was different from the way it was understood by the rank and file in the Irish community. He encouraged Irish people and those of Irish descent to rescue the Famine dead from the oblivion of that awful time. A memorial was a fitting, appropriate and timely way to create a lasting reminder. In 1996 a fund

Government, the descendants of the girls and interested members of the Irish and Australian communities, fundraising began. Tenders were called and 41 serious tenders were submitted from all over the world. Finally, on 4 December 1997, the design chosen was that of Hossein & Angela Valmanesh (immigrants themselves – from Iran – who live in Adelaide). By then budgets had risen to \$200,000. The final figure was in the region of \$350,000. After a huge fundraising campaign, deliberations with governments, historical organisations, archaeologists and builders, the Memorial was built. It was unveiled by Sir William Dean, Governor-General of Australia, on 28 August 1999 in the presence of an estimated 2,500 people including 800 Famine orphan descendants.

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*All over Ireland lonely cemeteries testify to the Famine dead – they lie in corners of traditional graveyards, in their own 'Famine Graveyards' some of which were attached to workhouses and some are remembered in isolated graves or pits by the roadsides.*

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was set up, the Irish Government brought a 45 piece orchestra from Ireland to launch Dr Charles Lennon's composition 'Famine Suite'. Concerts were organised in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. These events further motivated the impetus to commemorate Earl Grey's Irish workhouse immigrant women and remember the Famine and its legacy.

At a meeting of the Irish County Associations in November 1995, Tom Power was elected Chairman of the Famine Commemoration Committee. Finally, with the co-operation of the Historic Houses Trust, then NSW Premier Bob Carr, the Irish Government (both in Ireland and through the work of the Irish Ambassador) together with the Australian

As well as maintaining a website, interacting with descendants to gather the life stories of these women the Great Irish Famine Commemoration Committee runs three outreach programmes. One supports a programme for Sudanese refugees run by the sisters of Mercy at Mamre House, St Mary's. The Committee also funds a prize at Macquarie University and has established a bursary at University of Western Sydney for a female student who came to Australia as a refugee or is the daughter of a refugee. In time, it is hoped that this bursary will become a fully supporting scholarship. In this way the memory of the Irish orphan girls and the famine – in fact all modern global famines – is kept alive in the mind of the public through current day

refugees. Donations to these outreach programmes can be made through the Irish Famine memorial website at [www.irishfaminememorial.org](http://www.irishfaminememorial.org) where the individual women can be searched, not only by their names but by county or origin or their ship of arrival.

Since the unveiling, a gathering has been held each year on the last Sunday of August. This reminds people of the legacy of Famine orphan girls and, in the spirit of Mary Robinson's first call, remembers those who are victims of famines today. In 1998 The Famine Rock at Williamstown, Melbourne was dedicated by the Irish Ambassador and both Sydney and Melbourne have now developed their own way to remember the Famine immigrants and those who were forced to flee their homeland because of economic, political or social pressures.

At Galong near Binalong, not far from Burrowa and Yass, about an hour's drive from Canberra, in a graveyard attached to St Clement's Monastery and Retreat Centre is the grave of a famine orphan girl from Scarriff, County Clare. Ann Ryan, daughter of Patrick and Margaret Ryan from Scarriff, Clare, took up the offer to leave the Scarriff workhouse and make the long journey to Plymouth to board the Thomas Arbuthnot on 28 October 1849 bound for Sydney. With a large group of other girls from this ship Ann made her way on a dray to the Yass district with the support of Edward Strutt, the Surgeon Superintendent of the ship. He accompanied these young women and settled them into new workplaces. Ann worked for 'Ned' Ryan, married Derbyshire ex-convict John Howcroft and had two daughters before dying in 1855. The plaque in Galong cemetery reads:

In memory of Ann Ryan who arrived in Sydney on the Thomas Arbuthnot on 3 February 1850 and was hired by Edward 'Ned' Ryan of Galong House; and all the female workhouse orphans of the Great Irish Famine who rest in unmarked graves across Australia.

Ann Ryan wife of John Hawecroft and mother of Ann and Mary b.c.1834 Scarriff, Co Clare, Ireland died at Galong 8 October 1855.

Ann Ryan worked at 'Galong Castle', the country house and estate of Edward 'Ned' Ryan who was transported from Clonoulty, Tipperary with a band of men who had burned down an infirmary requisitioned by the army as a barracks. Under the Insurrection Act, 14 men were brought to trial. One man, Patrick Keogh, was hanged and 13 others including Ryan and his cousin Roger Corcoran were transported on the Surry arriving in Sydney in December 1816.

## Why bring destitute women to Australia?

Australia had always had a shortage of women due to the larger number of men who were transported and the large male labour workforce. The story is, of course, much more complicated than that and it is very important to read beyond the single story in order to understand the context of their lives – both in Ireland and in Australia.

The Famine workhouse orphan women were not the first large group of single women to immigrate to Australia. The first group came in 1830s on two ships, the Red Rover to Sydney with Irish women and the Princess Royal to Hobart with English women. They were all selected by the Emigration Commissioners in London as a trial to see if the importation of large groups of single women would suit colonial needs. Such was the success of this scheme that 14 more ships with single women sailed to Australia during the 1830s and a significant number of these women were from Ireland. Some, like the orphan girls were from institutions and most were from very respectable families. It is necessary to always keep in mind that no immigrant group, even among the Famine Irish, is homogeneous.

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*The descendants of these women are the people to whom we, as historians, owe a great debt...*

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Most of these single female emigrants survived the first difficult years of settling in, of being indentured servants and finding a life partner. Like Ann Ryan who went to work at 'Galong Castle' in the southern district of New South Wales they became part of pioneering communities throughout Australia. The descendants of these women are the people to whom we, as historians, owe a great debt, for rounding out their life stories, for providing photographs and thus allowing us who write about them as a group to tell the overview story. Increasingly, local histories in Ireland are drawing on the material now becoming available on the Famine Orphan Memorial website and are helping

to interrogate the surviving Workhouse Minutes Books and parish registers to locate them in their native places—to repatriate them to Irish soil.

The experiences of the Emigration Commissions in bringing women to the colonies in the 1830s enabled them to put in place solid procedures which benefited all future emigrants – surgeons on the ships took care of them. They were housed in depots like the Hyde Park Barracks, which existed in the major port cities and country centres, until they were able to find employment. The depots protected the women from prying and lecherous eyes until hired as domestic servants, nursemaids, dairymaids or other assistants in farming communities.

The 4,114 Earl Grey famine orphans sailed to three Australian colonies during 1848, 1849 and 1850. Official reports show that 2,253 came on eleven ships to Sydney, 1,255 on six ships to Port Philip (Melbourne) and 606 on three ships to Adelaide.

Memorialisation is important because 'Those who do not remember their past are condemned to repeat their mistakes'. The Great Irish Famine Commemoration committee encourages descendants of these young women to contribute the details of these brave women so they can be remembered on the website of the Australian National Famine Memorial. This memorial would not have been erected without

the support of modern-day Irish emigrants and we encourage readers to continue to support this project as it matures and develops.

On the glass panels of the memorial are the names of 400 women. While these names are those of workhouse orphan emigrants, the names represent all Famine dead but particularly in the Australian context, remember the survivors all of whose names are accessible [www.irishfaminememorial.org](http://www.irishfaminememorial.org) regardless of where interested people live: whether it be Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Bourke, Ballarat, Perth, Darwin, Ireland, India or anywhere on the globe.

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*Memorialisation is important because 'Those who do not remember their past are condemned to repeat their mistakes'.*

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In late August we will host the International Famine Commemoration with a Dinner in NSW parliament house on Friday 23 August, a seminar on Saturday 24 August including the launch of a new book based on the orphan girls by Irish novelist Evelyn Conlon. The main annual gathering and commemoration ceremony will be at the Memorial on Sunday 25 August 2013 and will be attended by Minister Jimmy Deenihan, Chairman of the Famine Commemorative Committee in Ireland.

Many stories are now on the website but the following show the variety of experiences and the longevity of some of the women whose lives began in deprivation and destitution but they achieved the aims of the Emigration Commissioners by becoming the wished-for domestic and rural

servants and suitable wives and mothers in the rapidly growing colonies of Australia.

**Eliza Dooley** (c.1836-1912) from Parsonstown (Birr), Offaly arrived per Tippoo Saib to Sydney in July 1850 with her sister Catherine and their cousin Ellen Dooley. At 14, Eliza was the youngest of the three women. Her parents, Michael and Bridget, from Kilcolman, were dead but an uncle remained in the workhouse and an aunt, the mother of Ellen Dooley was also in the Parsonstown workhouse when these three young women headed for Sydney. Eliza found work as a nursemaid in Maitland and in 1854 married Englishman, John Blanch. Within a decade the

couple was running the 'Royal Oak Inn' on the Uralla gold diggings near Armidale on the New England tableland. This inn was at one time terrorised by bushranger Thunderbolt whose inquest took place in their inn. Eliza and John Blanch raised 13 children. She remained in Uralla until 1891 when she moved into Armidale where she died aged 80 in 1912.

**Hannah Rafferty** (c.1831-1900) from Castlereagh, Roscommon arrived per Digby to Sydney on 4 April 1849. Hannah, as she was known in the colony, was named as Honor on the shipping list. She was aged 17, a Catholic house servant, who could not read or write and her parents, Thomas and Bridget, were both dead. She was employed in Bathurst where she married Bristol-born Charles Edwards on 1 January 1851 in the local Catholic Church. They had

seven children before Charles was killed in a gold mining accident at Cheshire Creek on 12 November 1866. Again destitute, this time with fatherless young children, Hannah remarried in 1869 to Frank Green. She died on 24 May 1900 and is buried in the Catholic portion of the Bathurst Cemetery with her daughter Sarah. Her proud descendant, Jim Edwards, was the first official recipient of the Irish Heritage Certificate presented by Irish Consul General, Caitriona Ingoldsby on 9 December 2011 at the Famine Memorial at Hyde Park Barracks.

**Margaret McEvoy** (c.1831-1929) from County Down arrived per Earl Grey to Sydney on 6 October 1848 with her sister, Eliza. This was the first ship to bring Irish young women from the workhouses during the Famine. Both girls were simply noted as from County Down and we have not yet confirmed their workhouse. They were Catholic, both sisters could read and their parents, Isaac and Jane, were both dead. Margaret was indentured as a domestic servant to Mr Hutchinson in Sydney. In 1853 she married builder, Thomas James, at Fivedock, Sydney and they had 8 children, including three sons who died young, aged 16, 18 and 20, leaving them with one son and four daughters. In July 1929, at the age of 96, in an ironic turn of events, Margaret died as the result of a fall while digging potatoes.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### HERE & THERE

Fiona S. Doyle

I was born in Ireland and moved to Australia when I was eight, returning to Ireland for a year when I was seventeen. Landscape and climate is often the thing that defines my experience and impression of a place. Having grown up in Western Australia, a desert landscape, the change in weather and colours of the Irish landscape were vastly different from what I was used to. These works are memories of my impression of the Irish landscape from that time, and the difference I noticed between the Irish and the Australian landscapes and climates. My emphasis is on colour, and how easily colours can affect your mood, trigger a memory, or define a place. I painted with the intention of giving the viewer a strong sense of both countries, and whatever connections, memories, nostalgia or experiences they may associate with them.

I lived in Wicklow and spent a lot of time in Bray and at Greystones Beach. "A Memory of Greystones" is a recollection of the walk along the coastline from Greystones Beach to Bray. I used gouache for this work, painting into puddles of water on the paper to recreate the colours and textures of the overcast and drizzly weather. "A View from the Sugarloaf / A View from the Skillion" compares the view from the Great Sugarloaf Mountain in Wicklow with the view from the Skillion in Terrigal, Australia, where I'm currently living. The view from the Sugarloaf, on the day that I climbed it, was dominated by a dark green and brown muddy landscape. When I look at the painting I'm taken back to that time and place – the cold, the wind, the texture of the mud and rock, the feeling of elation when I reached the top of the mountain. The painting of the Skillion is dominated by blues, particularly a deep azure blue that I associate with the Australian sky. It is a colour that I struggled to find in the Irish landscape, and became symbolic of a warm Australian summer for me. Similarly, I have since been unable to find many of the bright greens of the Irish landscape in the olive green Australian environment.

Fiona S. Doyle  
*A Memory of Greystones*  
gouache and pencil on paper  
12cm x 8cm and 8cm x 6cm, 2008



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### As Éirinn

Dr Dymphna Lonergan

This poem was inspired by the sight of Peter Daly at the airstrip in Bacchus Marsh, wearing a hat, in the shimmering heat, like something in the movie *Out of Africa*.

We were attending the summer Irish language school in the nearby Lady Northcote Recreation Park. The annual daonscoileanna in Australia are a great boon to maintaining our native language and also a way to meet new Irish people.

Earlier that day Peadar had told me how his father didn't want him to emigrate. I was struck by how far that young man had come in life, and how much he had been transformed in my eyes in the couple of days I knew him, from a quiet and genial classmate reading Irish poetry to an intrepid Irish airman about to take to the Australian skies back to his home in Canberra.

I heard the music from the movie *Out of Africa* the rest of that day and wrote this poem. Peadar, unfortunately, had not seen the movie and was embarrassed initially on receiving the poem, but then reluctantly accepted my homage once the context was explained.

A few years later Peadar, before his time, went ar shlí na firinne (on the way of truth).

### As Éirinn

Fear óg nach raibh cead aige dul ar imirce-

'We'll see'.

Fear oibre san Astráil ag breathnú ar an spéir.

Ag faire.

I bpáirc Bacchus Marsh

As an cheo

Ag druidim liom

Eitleán ar a dhroim.

Robert Redford díreach romham

Tráthnóna driachtúil.

Out of Africa im' chluasa.

Peadar im' radharc.

As Éirinn.

(Translation)

### Out of Ireland

A young man who wasn't let emigrate-  
'We'll see'.

A working man in Australia watching the sky.

In a field at Bacchus Marsh

Out of the fog

Coming towards me

A plane on his shoulder.

Robert redford right before me

A magical afternoon

Out of Africa in my ears

Peadar before me

Out of Ireland

# BIOGRAPHIES

## Professor Allan Chawner

Allan Chawner's field of research is Fine Art Photography. Chawner has been a practicing artist for more than 30 years and his artwork has been based around notions of sense of place in portraiture and landscape. Chawner's has consistently shown exhibitions of photographs and collaborated with writers or composers and presents exhibitions internationally through cultural exchange and developed links with small communities, exhibiting in venues outside mainstream art galleries. Chawner's work is a response to identity, both of the self and of the communities.

## Fiona S. Doyle

I completed my Bachelor of Fine Art in 2005 and have exhibited my work in Australia (Sydney, regional NSW and Victoria) and overseas (Finland, Turkey) since then. I work mostly in paint and drawing mediums and occasionally in film and found object sculpture. Common themes in my work include emotions, impressions, experiences, life and death.

## Gareth Jenkins

Originally based in Portarlington, County Offaly, Gareth like so many before him has moved to Australia, Darwin to explore the possibility of a new life for his family.

Predominately a painter his work seeks out the materiality of aesthetic reasoning through studio based research. He considers both the paint and the ground as object. Although problematic Gareth creates a challenging and contemporary practice that continues developing through each new body of work.

An undergraduate of Limerick School of Art and Design and a postgraduate of the National College of Art and Design in Dublin, Gareth has been the recipient of many awards and has exhibited widely in Ireland and internationally, including Croatia, Singapore and Australia.

## Dr Dymphna Lonergan

Dymphna Lonergan was born in Dublin, Ireland, and emigrated to Australia in 1972. She is a keen member of the Irish language community in Australia, attending and teaching at the annual Daonscoil in Sydney. Her interest in Irish place names in Australia can be seen in [www.theirishinaustralia.com](http://www.theirishinaustralia.com). Her book *Sounds Irish: The Irish Language in Australia* was published in 2004 and is available from Lythrum Press, Adelaide. Dymphna lectures in Academic & Professional Communication and Linguistics at Flinders University, South Australia.

## Dr Siobhan McHugh

Siobhan McHugh is an award-winning writer, documentary-maker and oral historian who accidentally emigrated to Australia in 1985, half a lifetime ago. Her social histories of Australia have won the NSW Premier's Literary Award and the New York Radio Festival Gold Medal. She vacillated between Ireland and Australia for many years before coming to equilibrium in Sydney. Here she reflects on how Ireland shaped her, through music, literature, politics and religion.

## Dr Annemarie Murland

Born in Glasgow, 1962 Annemarie Murland migrated to Australia in 1990 with her Australian husband, making Newcastle her permanent home. Murland commenced her studies at the University of Newcastle in 2000, where upon completion of a Bachelor of Fine Art Honours degree Murland received the Faculty and University Medal. Murland continued her studies with an APA Scholarship, gaining a Doctor of Philosophy, Fine Art in 2010.

Murland is currently employed at the University of Newcastle as a sessional academic in the discipline of painting and drawing and as a postgraduate supervisor. Murland's practice as research travels over the disciplines of painting, drawing and documentary photography to explore the affect of felt experience in relation to migration as both a personal and global phenomena.

Murland's great grandparents were turn-of-the-century economic migrants from County Donegal in the northwest coast of Ireland. Her ancestors left their homeland at the turn of the twentieth century and moved to Scotland as the politics of place made it impossible to sustain an authentic and sated life style. Scotland offered them, and the many other migrants who moved there, an opportunity of a new beginning but little else, as they were to remain marginalised by their religious identity. This legacy of migration and movement from one place to the next has played a significant role in shaping Murland's family history and identity. Transients, her forefathers avoided famine but not colonisation, nor the accompanying policies of suppression and isolation.

## Kiera O'Toole

Kiera O'Toole studied Fine Art at the Dublin Institute of Technology graduating in 2000 and went on to complete a Masters of Philosophy in Fine Art in Newcastle University, Australia in 2013. O'Toole has exhibited widely in group and solo exhibitions in Ireland, Finland and Australia including the National Museum of Australia in 2011. O'Toole has an extensive experience in teaching Fine Art as a casual academic, TAFE teacher and Community College and obtained several artists in residencies. As an early career researcher, O'Toole has maintained her professional art practice with her works collected in public and private collections including the Office of Public Works, Ireland.

