

Irish Palatine Association

NEWSLETTER

April 2020

We are conscious of people isolating in their homes around the world at this dreadful time of Covid-19 and we would like to send you greetings by way of this IPA Newsletter with some notes and information that we have gathered.



PALATINE VISITORS

Most visitors to the Irish Palatine Heritage Centre at Rathkeale are of Irish Palatine heritage and come from all regions of the world including Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand and England. These are the countries that the Irish Palatines emigrated to from Ireland over the three hundred years after their arrival in Ireland as refugees.

Other visitors include academics, historians, students, schools, plus some from the Palatinate in Germany. We also have visitors who don't have any Palatine heritage other than they were neighbours and friends of the Palatines in their youth and impart to us stories of being reared alongside the Palatine community years ago.

Other groups include those interested in the story of Methodism as the Irish Palatine story is so closely linked with Methodism. Three German visitors we had in June 2018 were from the Palatinate - known today as Rheinland Pfalz or simply "Die Pfalz". They had heard about a Palatine settlement in Ireland and took the time to look us up and visit with us. Patrick Gödtel, Nico Wohlwend and Sebastian Baumann, all from Otterbach near Kaiserslautern. Patrick and Nico are students. Sebastian is a carpenter.

PALATINE REFUGEES

Many of Irish Palatine heritage may not have considered the similarities in the Irish Palatine Story with those refugees arriving on our shores today. The Palatines were told of a land where they could live in peace and prosper. Promised land and fairness. They suffered war and strife in their homeland where their homes and crops were confiscated. They were exploited and robbed as they journeyed down the river Rhine. They were seen as a problem for the Dutch and made to feel unwelcome at Rotherdam. Dutch soldiers were sent to stop them and return them to Germany. They were exploited, accused of spreading disease and taking jobs from local people in London. They were similarly made unwelcome on arrival in Dublin, Ireland and were viewed suspiciously by the native Irish. When they moved on to other parts of the world they experienced many of the same problems all over again.

Today we can look back and see that the Irish Palatines were a positive influence on Ireland and the world. They made innovative contributions to Irish farming and played a formative role in the development of world Methodism. A quote we recently came across "the more I learn of history the more I can see of the future".

AUSTRALIAN BUSH FIRES

Being concerned for the safety of our members in Australia we made contact in January. IPA Journal contributor, Patricia Liddell replied to say that all was well but not without some concern. Patricia told us that it has been a very hard time. Although, the prediction was for a bad bush fire season because of the ongoing drought, the ferocity and devastation was beyond comprehension. There has been tremendous, much appreciated, support from the community both local and international. Locally in the Blue

Mountains National Park, as else where, trained wildlife rescuers have been searching for survivors that need care and special foods that were being left and checked each day. I left home early as fires were surrounding the village on three sides. It reached behind the houses across the street from my home and it is thanks to the New South Wales Rural Fire Service volunteers that the village suffered few losses. I took no chances and left when the fire was approaching and 'out of control' and didn't return under the fire was 'under control'. However, Blackheath would have burnt except for the dedication of the volunteer firefighters. Residents of a bushfire prone area are encouraged to have a 'fire plan'. Mine was to leave early and I had essentials packed and car with a full fuel tank in case. The NSW Rural Fire Services has a very good communication app. and I had requested to be notified when the fire was less than 8 kms away and that's when I left. There has been welcome rain now and grass is already shooting. The fires around are 'under control' with the nearest 7 kms away and because of the burnt terrain is unlikely to return here again. Fingers are crossed for more rain. Good for the kangaroos that have been coming to our street for a couple of years to eat dry grass on the verge because of the ongoing drought. See IPA Journal 20. Pages 16 – 19. to read about Patricia's Palatine heritage.

PALATINE & MĀORI HERITAGE

Those who participated in our September 2016 Palatine event in Rathkeale will remember Tania MacDonald, née Hoffman, a participant from New Zealand. Her Hoffman ancestors moved to County Kerry, to settle on the Blennerhassett lands in Ballymacelligot and married into the Blennerhassett family. You can read her full story in Journal 25. Pages 22 - 29. In October 2019 Tania organised a Hoffman Family Reunion for the descendants of George and Fannie Hoffman (nee Culhane) at her home in New Zealand and encouraged participants to support the Irish Palatine Association through membership and patronage. What you may not know is that Tania also has Māori ancestry and the following photos include some of her Māori family ancestors:-



SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to thank Kerry Best for recently donating some family heirlooms for our collection. These include a United Empire Loyalist medal and an artefact that relates to a story from a large collection she gathered titled *A Treasury of Huffman Stories* on her ancestors in Eastern Ontario, Canada. Perhaps with Kerry's permission one or two of the stories might appear in future issues of our Journal. Kerry can trace her family tree back to Elias Hoffman who left Ireland for America on the *Pery* in 1760. Much of her research was verified through land applications, agricultural censuses, military and other miscellaneous records. She mentions that she will maintain her DNA account for a couple of years to allow others discover more on their Palatine connections.

PALATINE ANCESTRAL HOMELAND TOUR - PFALZ 2020

We recently informed all who are planning in participating in our tour that due to the continuing global pandemic of the Coronavirus and the restrictions on travel that are currently in place, we have decided to postpone our Palatine Heritage tour of the Palatinate until May 2021. We presently have sufficient numbers to allow the tour to proceed with places more than two thirds filled and once the pandemic is under control we will be able to travel in a more relaxed atmosphere.

JOURNAL

The next issue of our annual Journal (number 27) will be going to press in the coming weeks. In the mean time to order back issues or to download an acrobat index of all articles in our journals visit our website at http://www.irishpalatines.org/shop/shop_journal.html

IPA MEMBERSHIP - GENTLE REMINDER

We remind members that have not renewed their membership for 2020 that we would very much appreciate your support for the work of the Association. A membership form may be downloaded from our website at <http://www.irishpalatines.org/support/member.html>

Irish Palatine Association, Irish Palatine Heritage Centre, Old Railway Buildings, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick, Ireland.
tel. +353 (0)63511 email: info@irishpalatines.org www.irishpalatines.org