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Heritage Notes

by Gerry Murphy
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Bruhenny TV - Liscarroll Sports 1869 - Murphy Hartstonge- Egmont

(1) Bruhenny TV

Readers who could not attend on the night of the events can now view two short fifteen minute videos on Bruhenny TV's channel on YouTube. At <https://youtu.be/N9PaGSGISBo> you can watch a video of our Heritage Week event that took place in Churchtown in August when Dr Brian Murphy spoke on the selection of Dr Douglas Hyde as the agreed candidate in Ireland's first presidential election. In the second video which is located at https://youtu.be/E6eFlsm_Djc you can see excerpts from the Annual Sean Clarach commemoration which took place in the village in April 2018. If, like me, you don't have the energy to type in those long web links you can do a simple Google search with the words "Bruhenny TV Sean Clarach Douglas Hyde" and – unlike Bono and U2 - you will find what you are looking for!

(2) Liscarroll Sports 1869

My cousin John Murphy in Boston, a son of Eddie from Egmont and a brother of Dr Brian who delivered a lecture on Dr Douglas Hyde for our Heritage Week event in August, emailed me an interesting clipping from the Cork Examiner on July 2, 1869 which nicely links Churchtown and Liscarroll. This was the year after William Murphy's sledge throwing victory at Liscarroll Castle. The Liscarroll Sports in 1869 competition was held on Tuesday (evening we assume) 29 June 1869. The first competition was based on "Throwing the Cricket Ball" which was open to "gentlemen" only. The participants were D M Browne, J MacCarthy, T Wallace, W Roche, H Walsh and M Fitzgibbon. D M Browne won with a splendid throw of 96 yards. The next event was the "Hop, Step and Leap" and this was won by Dr Michael D Murphy from Egmont, Churchtown who managed 42 feet and 3 inches. Dr Michael D Murphy was also the co-winner of the "High Leap" with a jump of 5 feet 3 inches. He was matched by W Roche. The three quarter mile race was "won well" by D M Brown. The sports event was held "in the immediate neighbourhood of the old historic castle". The attendance was lower than expected due to an unexplained "cause of a local nature".

(3) Murphy Hartstonge

Dr Michael M Murphy mentioned above - was a brother of William Boss Murphy (1831-1911) of Leap, Churchtown after which Boss Murphy's Pub in Churchtown is called. Dr Michael emigrated to New Zealand and is buried in Dunedin. Michael's sister Mary married James Flynn Hartstonge who farmed at Sunford in Liscarroll.

James and Mary and their large family emigrated to New Zealand in the 1870s. Her sisters Margaret and Eliza also emigrated to New Zealand. By the time Dr Michael arrived in New Zealand he had three sisters there and, of course, a large family of Hartstonge in-laws living there. The Hartstonge family initially settled on a farm they purchased at Macraes Flat in Otago Province in the South Island but later moved on to own and open a hotel in Dunedin called The Robbie Burns Hotel (now a bar still bearing the same name). Later Mary and Eliza moved to Australia and are buried in Fawkner Cemetery in Melbourne. Dr Michael Murphy and his brother-in-law James Flynn Hartstonge were colourful characters with lots of material available on their lives. Before their departure for New Zealand both James and Dr Michael were involved in the Liscarroll Race Committee. The Murphy Hartstonge and Murphy Beard families in New Zealand that spring from James and Mary and Margaret and Henry now number in their hundreds. There are no descendants of Dr Michael D Murphy alive though he has five children. The current generation of Murphy-Hartstonge -Beard in New Zealand are all third and fourth cousins and spread throughout the two islands. Some have also emigrated to Australia. A small number have visited Liscarroll and Churchtown since the 1960s when travelling such long distances became easier.

(4) Egmont

Egmont which is a townland in Churchtown was named by the Earls of Egmont. It was formerly known as Ballymacow. The Earls also used the name Egmont to name other places throughout the globe. One such is Mount Egmont or now Mount Taranaki, which is an active volcano in the Taranaki region on the west coast of New Zealand's North Island. Although the mountain is now more commonly referred to as Taranaki, it has two official names under the alternative names policy of the New Zealand government. The 2,518 meter (8,261 ft) mountain is one of the most symmetrical volcanic cones in the world. Because of its resemblance to Mount Fuji, Taranaki provided the backdrop for the movie The Last Samurai. Another Egmont name can be found on Prince Edward Island in Canada. It is called Cap Egmont. As complete aside I remember a very amusing entry in a 1960s Carnival Fancy Dress Parade in Churchtown. It was probably 1967 at the time of the Arab Israeli War and the large sign on the trailer read "Egg-mont Shelled" and the participants were using eggs as ammunition. Fifty years later it's still a good pun on the word Egmont and what was happening at the time.

(5) Heritage Society

It's never a dull week when it comes to Churchtown Heritage as there is always activity on Facebook or emails enquiries. Also with the rise of DNA testing for genealogical research more and more people are making contact. If you have any heritage points you wish to make or suggestions please email gmurphy@bruhenny.com.



Gerry Murphy with his third cousin Brendan Knowles who is a direct descendant of Margaret Murphy (1855 – 1897) who was born in Egmont. The picture was taken at Margaret’s grave in the Southern Cemetery, Dunedin, New Zealand. Margaret’s brother Dr Michael D is also buried in the same cemetery. Margaret Murphy and her two sisters Mary and Eliza were sisters of William Boss Murphy after whom Boss Murphy’s in Churchtown village is named. Margaret married Henry Beard whom she met in New Zealand and Mary married James Flynn Hartstonge from Sunford, Liscairroll before they emigrated.

