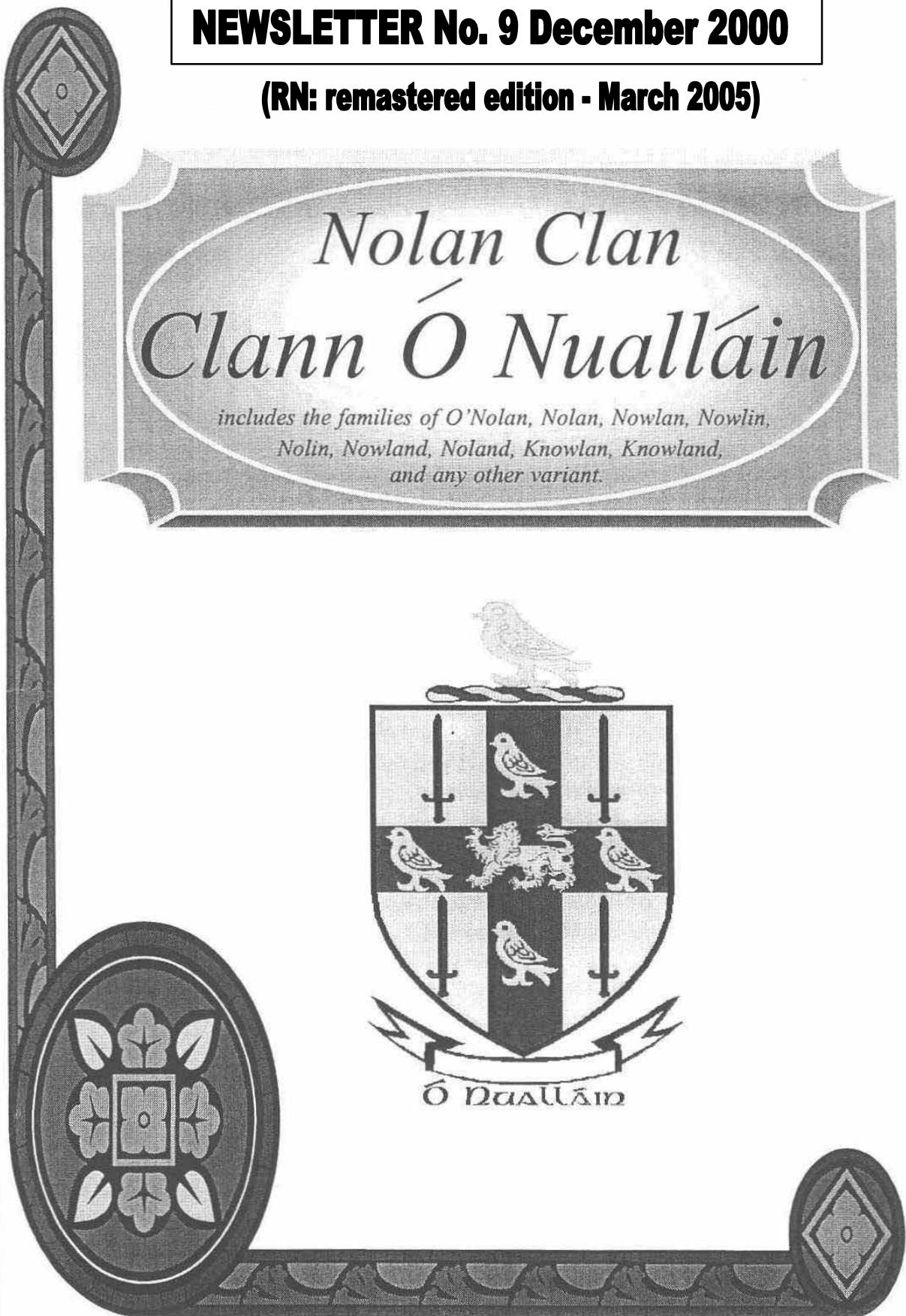


# **NEWSLETTER No. 9 December 2000**

**(RN: remastered edition - March 2005)**

## *Nolan Clan* *Clann Ó Nualláin*

*includes the families of O'Nolan, Nolan, Nowlan, Nowlin,  
Nolin, Nowland, Noland, Knowlan, Knowland,  
and any other variant.*



## ***Our New Chief***

Our new Chief is Mr. William Nolan better known as Liam. He is the youngest of a large family from Foynes Co. Limerick. He attended Foynes national school, Mount Mellerey secondary and graduated to Dentist from University College Dublin in the mid 50's. He spent most of his working life in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway, where he still lives with his wife Emer. Liam was elected Chief of the Clan at the Clan Gathering last July.

He attended the inauguration of the Kavanagh Clan last September. By tradition the Chief of the Nolan Clan is the inaugurator of the Kavanagh Clan and Liam duly inaugurated their new Chief Don Kavanagh from New Jersey, USA. The ceremony had to be held indoors due to inclement weather. It is usually held in the grounds of Ferns castle, the ancestral home of the Kavanaghs for centuries. This was followed by a most enjoyable medieval type Banquet in Ferns.

### ***The Late Noel V. Nowlan***

We are sorry to announce the death of Dr. Noel V. Nowlan who passed away on the 10th of July. Noel Vincent Nowlan the only child of Vincent Nowlan a wine importer and the artist Frances Conry was born in Dublin in 1921. He was educated at Belvedere College and University College Dublin, where he was awarded a first class honours degree in chemistry and the Hugh Ryan medal in 1945. He completed his doctorate, also in chemistry, in 1949. In the same year he married Alma FitzGerald a fellow UCD scientist and she and Noel moved to Liverpool where he initially worked with Lever Bros. Laboratories. In 1952 he joined the Royal Naval Scientific Service where he developed a strong interest and expertise in corrosion chemistry and metallurgy. His interest in these fields lead him to join the UK Nuclear Installations Inspectorate which acted as an independent regulator of nuclear activities. He returned to Ireland to join the Nuclear Energy Board in 1976. He recognised the urgent need to regulate radiation sources used in medicine, industry, research and teaching. After he became Chief Executive in 1984, he developed a program to ensure that all such sources were licensed. He also saw the need for a comprehensive program for monitoring radioactivity in the environment, although it took the Chernobyl accident to persuade the Politicians to make funds available for this purpose. He considered it important to develop a national radon monitoring program and to remedy houses and work places where high levels had been detected. He was a strong supporter of the Joint European Torus JET research program on Nuclear Fusion, believing that fusion power would ultimately provide a source of energy without many of the hazards associated with the present day fission based nuclear industry.

Noel had many interests outside his work. These included anything to do with house building and renovation, gardening, literature, music, travel and fishing. Much of his time in his final years was spent researching and writing his family history. He loved all things French including good wine. He spoke the language well, and following his retirement in 1990, spent many happy times with Alma in his house in France.

He is survived by Alma and their five children, Hugh, Peter, Denis, Mary and Frances. Alma has got Nolan connections on her own side of the family as her great grandfather James Nolan from Kilbane, Co. Limerick, was married to Catherine FitzGerald on the 16th of November 1825. Our new Chief Liam is also descended from the same James Nolan.

## Dr. John Joseph Nolan



John Joseph circa 1977

Was born on February 13th, 1921 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to James and Ann Fogarty Nolan who married in their early forties. His hard working parents gave their second child the first name of his paternal grandfather, John Nolan who left Co. Mayo to come to America and his mother's recently deceased brother, John (Jack) Fogarty who had fought 32 rounds for the World Welter Weight Championship in 1884. John was given the middle name of his mother's brother, Joseph Fogarty, who coached Yale University to a collegiate basketball championship in the first quarter of the Twentieth century.

John and his older brother Richard were from the only Irish family in their Italian working class neighborhood near the intersection of 15th and Reed in Philadelphia. John Nolan grew up hardened to the tough Depression days and even before reaching his adult height of six feet excelled in sports as had his maternal uncles.

John Nolan was also an honor student at St. Joseph's Prep in Philadelphia when he was chosen All-City running back when his team won the Philadelphia Catholic League Football Championship in 1938. He won a scholarship to the University of Pennsylvania by placing first in languages and third overall among 1,000 students examined. John Nolan earned two varsity letters for Penn's varsity college football team which finished sixth in the country in his junior year. He called then offensive signals in leading his team to the opponent's two yard line before the eventual national champion, University of Michigan, stalled the Penn attack that would have tied the game in Ann Arbor. Win or lose, the strength of his life was his character to persevere against the odds.

John Nolan was honored by induction into the Phi Beta Kappa academic fraternity upon graduation from college. The popular Irishman and handsome scholar athlete with dark brown curly hair was also elected Vice President of his graduating class by his Ivy League classmates.

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, John Nolan enlisted as a Navy ensign and was selected to an accelerated program at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School to produce doctors for war time efforts. Upon graduation from medical school, he married pretty, raven haired, and spirited Mary Jane Donnelly after a whirlwind courtship of almost ten years. Mary Jane Donnelly and Bernard Cardinal Law of Boston are descended from John and Mary Law of Clonabreany, County Meath.

While on active duty, John Nolan later served as a ship's doctor on the Navy oiler, Caloosahatchee, which fueled war ships with inflammable petrol in the Atlantic. While completing his Naval commitment after the war with the U.S. Marines in North Carolina, he was begged to serve as the coach for the football team at the 20,000 soldier Camp Lajeunne. His undefeated and untied team, on which he was a player-coach at age 26, won the Mid-Atlantic Fleet Championship in 1947.

Following navy service and completing his medical residencies, John and Mary Jane Nolan settled in the Washington D.C. area. On January 1st, 1951, their only child, David Brian Nolan, was born.

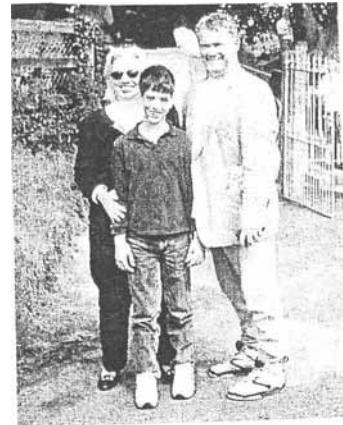
From the successful completion of four years of residency in both General and Thoracic Surgery at Veterans and other hospitals, Dr. John Nolan became a board certified Cardiovascular Surgeon and began a sole practice in Arlington, Virginia. During his forty-two years as a practicing physician, John Nolan served as President of the Arlington County Medical Society and was elected Chief of Surgery at Arlington Hospital for a maximum allowed tenure of five years (1977-1982).

Following recovery from emergency heart surgery to repair a ruptured heart valve in 1987, Dr. John Nolan retired from active practice and accepted a presidential appointment to the U.S. Veterans Department Board of Appeals as a physician expert to work with attorneys entrusted with the enforcement of medical standards for all Veterans Hospitals in the United States.

Dr. John Nolan passed away from a sudden pulmonary embolism on June 6th, 1991 at age 70. His widow and beloved wife of forty-six years, Mary Jane Nolan, succumbed on January 28th, 1998 to an ischemic stroke following a thirty-five year battle with diabetes. Dr. Nolan is survived by his brother, Richard, a recipient of two bronze and one silver star from service with the 79th Army Division in World War II, his son David Brian Nolan, former White House Counsel to President Ronald Reagan, his daughter-in-law, Cheryl Cottle Nolan, and three grandsons, John Joseph Nolan II, David Brian Nolan II, and Christopher Dalton Nolan.



**John Joseph and his wife Mary Jane circa 1950**



**David Cheryl & Christopher  
at the 2000 Clan Gathering**

## **Nolans in Military History**

**by David Brian Nolan Esq.**

Nolans have served courageously in major military conflicts throughout the centuries. They have been exalted in victory and endured the agony of lost causes.

A Nolan fought for Irish King Brian Born at the battle of Clontarf in the year 1014. Boru's victory drove the Vikings out of Ireland. However, the hope for a united Emerald Isle under Boru was dashed shortly after his battlefield victory when the seventy-five year old monarch and his body guards were slaughtered by a wandering band of vengeful Norsemen.

In 1690, an Ensign Nolan under Colonel Burke fought the outnumbered Catholic army of King James in the Battle of the Boyne. The victory of Dutch and English Protestant forces by William of Orange led to English subjugation of the Irish people for over the next two centuries.

Colonel James Nolan fought valiantly but without ultimate success in the 1798 uprising against British control of Ireland. Had the French delivered the extent of support to the Irish as had been extended to colonists in the American Revolutionary War, Ireland's ultimate freedom from England could have been accelerated by over 120 years.

In America, Timothy Nolan was among 45 Irish born freedom fighters in 1836 who comprised roughly a third of the force defending the Alamo mission in Texas from assault by the Mexican General Santa Ana. Their fighting to the last man in refusing to surrender their San Antonio fortifications gained enough time for General Sam Houston to organize his army to win Texas independence from Mexico.

During the Crimean War in the 1850's a Nolan scout served with the British invasion forces of Russia. The Charge of the Light Brigade, immortalized by the verse of Alfred Lord Tennyson, has been attributed fairly or unfairly to Nolan's battlefield guidance.

In cramped ocean transit to the World War I battlefields of France, John Nolan of Philadelphia contracted Tuberculosis while sleeping on deck with other shipboard American troops. After the American forces turned the tide of war in favor of the British and French against Kaiser Wilhelm, John Nolan left the military to try to recover his lung's health in arid California.

John's nephew, Corporal Richard Nolan of Philadelphia and his fellow soldiers of the U.S. 19th Division fought their way through Normandy during the successful D-Day invasion of France. Following his rapid recovery from a bullet wound to the leg which could have guaranteed his prompt return trip to the United States, Dick Nolan insisted on rejoining his decimated army squad for the remainder of its fight to the Rhine river. His war time valor, which included rescuing screaming wounded from a building under continuous mortar attack, earned him a silver star and two bronze star medals in addition to his Purple Heart decoration for his being wounded in combat.



Richard (Dick) Nolan as a Christian Brother seminarian following World War II, with Mary Jane and John Joseph

Dick Nolan who is a member of the Clan and his wife Nancy reside today in Gilbert, Arizona.

Their children are Gregory Nolan of New Jersey, Helene Nolan Ives of Arizona, Chris Nolan Moran of New Jersey, and Francis, Kevin and Tommy Nolan of Pennsylvania.

The Nolans stand well among fellow courageous souls who have fought for God and Country.

**Richard (Dick) Nolan as a Christian Brother seminarian following World War II, with Mary Jane and John Joseph**

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## Congratulations

To Francis Nolan on the birth of his granddaughter last July. The birth clashed with his planned trip to the Clan gathering. Francis is trying to trace his ancestors who came from Co. Kilkenny. James Nolan, married Bridget Gaul in Kilmacow, Co. Kilkenny 24th Feb. 1835. They arrived in Philadelphia, Pa. on ship Carrick on Jan. 12th, 1850, having left Liverpool. He would like to get their birth dates and their parents names if possible. They brought with them their children born in Ireland: Ellen, Mary, Bridget, William, Patrick, Michael who was the great grandfather of Francis, and Catherine. They also had children born in Philadelphia, Pa., USA: John, Margaret, Sarah Ann, and James (all born in St. Ann's Parish in Philadelphia, Pa.). Kilmacow parish was divided into two parishes around 1842 or so. The new parish was called Mullinavat. Consequently, some of the above children who were born in Ireland were baptised in Kilmacow and some in Mullinavat. If anyone can add to this research, they can contact Francis via email at 06FXN@webtv.net or post to Suite 200, 1494 Old York Road, Abington, PA 19001, USA.

## ***Robert J. Nolin***

Robert who joined the Clan last April was able to trace his family back to one Jacques Nolin born about 1616 and a resident in Aunis, (Charente-Maritime), France. This was possible through church records in Canada and at St. Jean, Perrot Diocese, France. His son Jacques II was apparently a soldier in the Carignan-Saliers Regiment and arrived in Canada in 1665. Robert has not been able to make a connection back to Ireland other than the finding that the Nolans who fought the Cromwellians forces that invaded Ireland fled Ireland after their defeat in 1648. But Church records in Canada indicate one Roger Nolin was killed by an Iroquois Indian on the Island of Orleans in the St. Lawrence river just below the city of Quebec, in 1605. So the early, "Irish Wild Geese", might have been earlier than 1648.

Robert would appreciate any words of advice that would lead to a general home site in Ireland. He can be contacted at [k2ghf@xtalwind.net](mailto:k2ghf@xtalwind.net) or at 11615 East Stork Court, Floral City, Florida 34436, USA.

## ***Internet Info***

Roger Nowlan from Canada is developing a website at <http://www.attcanada.ca/~rnowlan/clan/index.htm> . Roger has information on the book along with other bits of information likely to be of interest to current and potential Nolan Clan members in Canada. Roger's email address is [mowlan@attcanada.ca](mailto:mowlan@attcanada.ca) and he would appreciate some feedback. There is more information at <http://www.irishclans.com> and go to the O'Nolan Clan.

## ***AGM***

Our AGM was held on the 15th of July and the following officers were elected.

**Clan Chief:** Liam Nolan, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway.

**Tanaiste:** Judith Nolan, Bristol, UK.

**Secretary:** Tom Nolan, Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

**Treasurers:** Sean & Mai Nolan, Ardattin, Co. Carlow.

**P.R.O.:** John Nolan, Ballytarsna, Co. Carlow.

**Ass. Secretary:** Paul Nolan, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

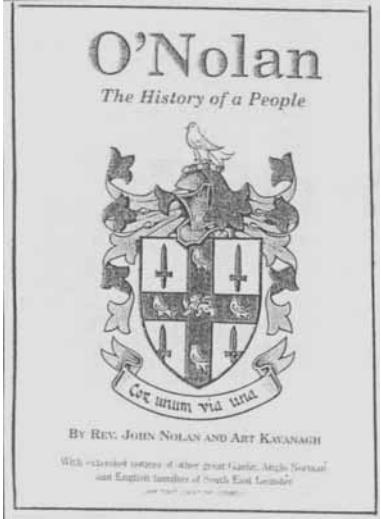
**Committee:** Maureen Nolan, Mena Rice, Sheila Fox, Gerald Fox,  
David Nolan, Michael Nolan, Mike Nolan and Molly Nolan.

**The question of unpaid membership renewals was discussed and it was decided that due to the high cost of postage, the newsletters will only be posted to fully paid up members from now on.**

Our next Clan gathering will be held in Carlow in 2002 and we will give you more details about dates and venue in future newsletters

## ***Newsletter***

If you have any items of interest to share with the Clan, please send them to Tom Nolan, 14 Oakleigh, Celbridge, Co. Kildare. Thanks to David B. Nolan for the articles about his father John Joseph and uncle Richard (Dick).



## Nolan Book

The book on the history of the Nolan clan from the 2nd century up to the early 20th century was launched by Dr. Judith Nolan at our gathering last July.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Art Kavanagh together with his publishers and printers for completing this high quality book. There are still some soft back copies of the book available.

***Write to Sean Nolan, Ardattin, Co. Carlow. The price including P&P, Ireland & UK £19, USA \$39, Canada & Australia \$65.***

## New Members

We welcome the following members that have joined recently.

Mr. Michael Nolan, Mellison, Glengoole, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

Maire Ni Phuirseil, Windgap, Co. Kilkenny.

Mr. Liam Nolan, Bridge Street, Ballinasloe Co. Galway.

Mrs. Shiela Fox, 1 Vinegarth, Epworth, Nr. Doncaster, Nth Lines, England.

Linda Nolan-Longton, Carwood Ln, Whittle-I:e-Woods, Chorley, Lanes, UK.

Mr. Noel Reilly, 989 Andover Terrace, Ridgewood, New Jersey 07450, USA.

Deborah A Lubbert, 21 Cedar Court, Bloomington, Illinois 61701, USA.

Richard Nolan, 2891E. Santa Rosa Drive; Gilbert, Arizona 85234, USA.

Thomas M. Nolan, 4153 West Pine Blvd, St. Louis, MO. 63108, USA.

Joseph E Barrett, 505 Hastings Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-1320, USA.

## Newsletter

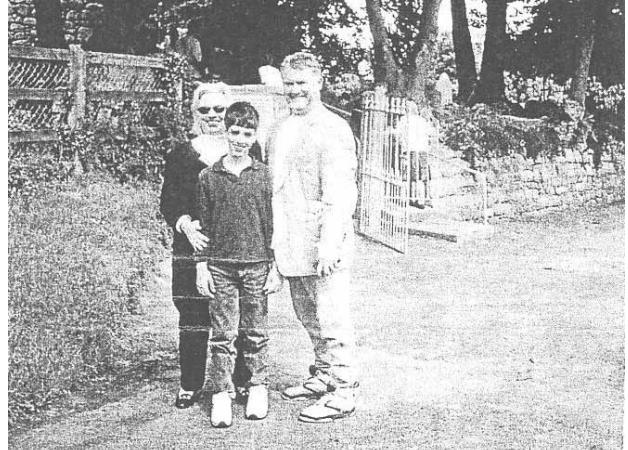
If you have any items of interest to share with the Clan, please send them to Tom Nolan, 14 Oakleigh, Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

**Don't forget if you change your address, please let us know.**

## PICTURES TAKEN DURING MILLENIUM GATHERING



**Des (R.I.P), Sean, John T. & family, Maureen  
all under the Nolan Banner**



**David Brian Nolan with his wife Cherl and  
son Christopher at Templepeter Graveyard  
where about 50% of the headstones are  
Nowlans or Nolans circa 1700's and 1800's**



**Liam's inauguration as Chief**



## PRESS COVERAGE

### Book on Nolans completed after gap of 80 years

By Charlie Keegan (Carlow Nationalist)

A BOOK on the Nolan clan which was launched on Friday night last in Leighlinbridge Community Centre, County Carlow, marks the successful culmination of a project which commenced a century ago.

*O’Nolan – The History of a People* has co-authors the late Fr. Nolan and Art Kavanagh from Bunclody, Co. Wexford, who completed the work over recent years and saw it to its conclusion at the request of the Nolan clan.

The book was officially launched by Dr. Judith Nolan who came from the West Country of England where she lives. Dr. Nolan is a lecturer in education for over 50 years and is holder of MAs in Irish and English literature.

She spoke of the indebtedness to Rev. John Nolan and Art Kavanagh. It was John Nolan’s research which provided the data which enabled the opening 15 chapters of the book to remain intact from his hand. John Nolan died in 1920. Art Kavanagh then had the perception in seeing the value of having the book completed.

Dr. Nolan said the antiquity of the family alone gives the book credence. “The book”, she said, “brought us back to pre-Christian time and a peculiar set of events led to its birth.” Following the death of Fr. Nolan, who had Carlow roots, the work fell to Fr. Peadar

MacSuibhne and when he died to Professor Matthew Nolan. On the death of Professor Nolan, the next to take on the job was Mary Fitzsimmons, a member of the Kavanagh clan and it was felt that Art Kavanagh would be the ideal person to finish the book.

“We have the final result here tonight – a book of history, of culture and a work of art.”

Dr. Nolan said she had researched her own family history in counties Kerry and Limerick, work that had been a labour of love to her.

She described the book as “a fine history of stern stuff, independence – of sheer determination to survive”.

“It is an isolated history. It is tied, inevitably, to the land and the many other clans and tribes, the Kavanaghs among them and, of course to events of history. We have deep roots – roots of which we are rightly proud” she stated.

The Norman and Danish infiltrators drove the Nolans to fiercely defend their rights. Dr. Nolan noted with pride that not one of the Nolan clan ever acquire a title which would turn them away from their ancestry.

“Today we are proud of our unswerving loyalty, pride and determination. Much of the data on lands had been lost to destruction but we must not forget the high esteem those involved in literature, poetry,

history, artistry and craftsmanship were held – that is part of our heritage.”

It is a fine, deep-rooted history which is now documented in the volume she was launching.

“I have much pleasure, pride and honour in declaring the history of the Nolans officially launched.”

Art Kavanagh, in a brief address, spoke of his gratitude to the Nolan people he met and who convinced him this work had to be done. He referred to outgoing Clan Chief Sean Nolan, Ardattin, Tullow, as a man who had been a great Carlow Gaelic footballer and had played for his province. In mentioning other members of the Nolan clan, Art spoke of the late Tom Nolan, Slyguff, Bagenalstown, who died suddenly last year describing him as a great violinist.

Art recalled that on the first night it was decided the book would have to be finished when Jim Nolan, the great balladeer from Ballinrush, Myshall, the late Tom, Sean and Dr. John Nolan from America were gathered in Bunclody. “We had a great night of singing, dancing and story-telling.”

Fr. John O’Nolan had done tremendous research on the family said Art, adding that the Nolan clan had provided some very fine people right down through the centuries.

Ann Nolan, from Dublin, grand niece of Fr. John O'Nolan said he had been parish priest in Moneyglass, County Antrim, where he set up the first sweep in Ireland.

He also led pilgrimages to Lourdes and Rome and reported for The Irish News newspaper in Belfast.

"I had no idea there was so much interest in the Nolan family" she commented. It was tremendous that a book on the family started 100 years ago has now been completed.

Sean Nolan said Art Kavanagh had been a godsend to the clan in terms of having the book completed.

He spoke of Tom Nolan from Slyguff, recalling that in the early stages of the Nolan Clan organisation there were occasions when only two and three people attended. "But Tom would always say that we hold

another meeting. Finally the movement got going.

It was a proud occasion on which to be a Nolan, said Sean, adding that it was very pleasing that the late Tom's son and daughter would be playing at Irish music nights later that night in the Lord Bagenal Inn and again on Saturday night.

MC for the night was Leighlinbridge historian Martin Nevin who noted that clan members had travelled from America, England and different parts of Ireland for the book launch.

"This is an historic occasion for the Nolan clan because this [is] the first and only history of the clan."

Martin said it was appropriate that the book was being launched in Leighlinbridge, just a stone's throw from Dinn Ri, the "Hill of the Kings". Leighlinbridge is well known for its many famous people who

have distinguished themselves in Ireland and in "far flung fields".

The committee of the O'Nolan clan was set up in the early 1990's. "I have no Nolan in my background but became very much involved with them, probably because I was a local historian. At the early meetings there was great interest and enthusiasm, but that dwindled. It was very much left to a few people with the real Nolan traits - dedication, tenacity and stickability, to carry it through to this evening."

Martin said the book had been in the pipeline a century ago and it has taken that length to bring it into being. He felt the book has appeared at the right moment in history and recommended it to every member of the Nolan or O'Nolan clan..



**Pictured at the O' Nolan Clan dinner dance in the Lord Bagenal in Leighlinbridge recently were John Nolan outgoing chief, Mary Fitzsimons holder of the O'Nolan archives, Kay Nolan and Liam Nolan incoming chief of the O'Nolan Clan.** Photo by Michael O'Rourke.

# New book on O’Nolan Clan is launched

**Justine O’Mahony**

*Staff Reporter (Carlow Nationalist)*

LEIGHLINBRIDGE was the location last Friday night for the launch of a book, chronicling the history of the O’Nolan clan. **O’Nolan - The History of a People** was compiled by local author and historian, Art Kavanagh and deals with the O’Nolan clan from earliest times right up to the 19th Century.

The origins of the book began back in the early 1900’s when Fr. John Nolan, from the North but whose roots lay in Carlow decided to write a book on the history of the O’Nolans. During his quest he visited Carlow quite frequently where he had cousins in Ballinrush, Myshall.

Unfortunately Fr. Nolan died before the book was complete however the 16 or more chapters he did finish were stashed in a suitcase. Somehow Fr. Nolan’s manuscripts and letters were sent to Fr. Swayne of Clonegal for completion of the book and possible publication but sadly he passed away and the book remained unfinished.

The suitcase was given to a professor in Newbridge College - Matthew Nolan and upon his death in 1977, his daughter, Mary Fitzsimmons and cousin of hers, Br. P.J. Kavanagh read Art Kavanagh’s book. ‘In the shadow of Mount Leinster’ and felt he would be the person to bring the book to its fruition.

They wrote to him in 1996 and after meeting him, he took custody of the material. He in turn contacted a number of the Nolan Clan who all urged him to undertake the work.

Last Friday night saw the launch of the long-awaited finished work at the Parish Centre in Leighlinbridge. Dr. Judith Nolan who has an MA in Irish and English literature launched the book in front of an audience of 150 people. Those in attendance included the author, Art Kavanagh, Chairman of Carlow County Council, Walter Lacey, Cllr. Rody Kelly and local historian Martin Nevin as well as a host of members of the Nolan Clan.



Pictured at the launch of ‘O’Nolan – The History of a People’ were Martin Nevin, MC for the night; Sean Nolan, Ardattin; Cllr. Walter Leacy, Chairman, Carlow County Council; John Nolan, Clan Chief; Art Kavanagh, author of the book; Tom Nolan, secretary of the Nolan Clan and Dr. Judith Nolan, Bristol.

Pictured at the launch of ‘O’Nolan - The History of a People’ in the Leighlinbridge Community Centre were (front row): Mai Nolan, Ardattin; Kay and John Nolan, Ballytarsna; Catriona O’Brien, Ballytarsna and Hannah Nolan, Bendenstown. Back row - Sean Nolan, Ardattin and Jim Nolan, Newcastle, Co. Dublin.



## HANDING OVER THE REINS



John Nolan, Ballybrommell, Carlow, outgoing chief of the Nolan Clan, hands over the chain of office to incoming chief Liam Nolan from Ballinasloe at the Nolan Clan gathering in the Lord Bagenal, Leighlinbridge.