



# THE NOLAN



The Newsletter of the O’Nolan Clan Family Association

March 2009

Issue 19

## CONTENTS

- 1 Happy St. Patrick’s
- 2 In Brief ...
- 3 A few pictures from the Clan Gathering
- 4 Galway’s First Nolan Family
- 5 Galway to New Zealand - A Family’s Journey
- 8 Flight of the Earls - a Nolan discovery
- 9 Philip Nolan - Wild West Hero
- 10 A few select Irish Proverbs for St. Patrick’s Day
- 11 In Sickness & Health
- 12 Membership Form

## Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig

St Patrick's Day is a joyful day of celebration, reminding us of our shared heritage and membership in a remarkable global family.

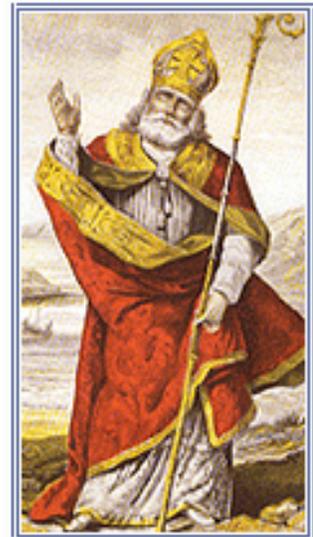
In the words of Irish president Mary Macalese in 2005, “we are the adopted children of St. Patrick, the outsider whose great gift to Ireland and her people was his exhortation to love one another. Each generation has interpreted his message in very different circumstances. Many left Ireland with very little: yet no matter how poor or oppressed they were they remembered those who were even worse off at home and they created vital networks of care for each other.”

In 2009, as the world struggles with a global recession, may these bonds of friendship and family forged over generations grow ever stronger.

On behalf of the Nolan Clan, I wish you all a very Happy St. Patrick’s Day and



May you always have  
 walls for the winds,  
 a roof for the rain,  
 tea beside the fire,  
 laughter to cheer you,  
 those you love near you,  
 and all your heart might desire!



## O’Nolan Clan Family Association

### Chief – Pa Nolan

Mopoon Villa,  
Sydenham Road  
Dundrum, Dublin 14  
Republic of Ireland

TEL: +353 (87) 243-8047  
Email: panolan@ireland.com

### Secretary – Catherina O’Brien

Ballytarsna,  
Nurney, Co. Carlow  
Republic of Ireland

TEL: +44 (117) 9737992  
Email: obrien@itcarlow.ie

### Treasurers & Membership –

#### Sean & Mai Nolan

Ardattin, Co. Carlow  
Republic of Ireland

TEL: +353 (59) 91 55666

### Editor - Roger Nowlan

222 Ave. De La Colline  
Gatineau, Quebec  
J9J 1T8 Canada

TEL: +1 (819) 684-2535  
FAX : +1(819) 684-6321  
Email: rnowlan@primus.ca

The Nolan Clan Newsletter is published at least once a year by and for the membership of the Nolan Clan Family Association.

Member input for the newsletter is always welcome. Letters, comments and articles of interest should be sent to the editor either by regular mail, by FAX or by E-Mail at the addresses listed above. The Editor reserves the right to condense or edit for style all items submitted for publication.

Editorial views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Clan association.

## In Brief ...

### Last Clan Gathering

The last Clan Gathering was held on July 23, 2008, and everyone who attended enjoyed themselves, the day culminating in a sumptuous evening meal at Ballykealey House, Co. Carlow.

At the clan general meeting a new Chief, Secretary and Tanaiste were chosen. Our new Chief is Pa (Padraig) Nolan of Dublin, with family roots in Co. Kerry. The new Secretary is Catherina O’Brien of Ballytarsna, Nurney, Co. Carlow. The new Tanaiste (Chief-in-waiting) is Madeline Salter of Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow. Catherina and Madeline are daughters of deceased clan member and former clan Tanaiste John Nolan of Ballytarsna.

### Next Clan Gathering

The next clan gathering is tentatively planned for Ballykealey Hotel in Co. Carlow in the July/August 2010 timeframe.

### Dues are Due

... every year, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January

Yearly dues are payable by personal cheque in your local currency i.e. 10 Euros, \$13 USD, \$15 CAD or \$17 AUD, whichever applies to you.

For the benefit of those who may not already have renewed their membership, a renewal form is included at the end of the newsletter.

### <http://NolanFamilies.org>

Clan members are reminded of the online information resources available at this website, that is:

- a database of early Nolan family stories from around the world
- a database of Irish memorials (including most Nolan tombstones found in Co. Carlow and bordering towns, some dating back to the 1700s)
- a forums database meant to capture queries and tidbits of information provided by visitors to the website.

### In this issue

In the first two articles we explore the history of the Galway Nolans and a particular sub-branch found today in New Zealand.

In a third article I revisit the Flight of the Earls (1607) and relate my findings of an early Nolan link to France and New France (now Canada).

An obituary for a valiant WW II veteran, the story of an early American pioneer and a few Irish Proverbs to enjoy while celebrating St. Patrick’s day round out the newsletter.

*By Roger Nowlan  
Newsletter Editor*

---

## A Few Pictures from our last Nolan Clan Gathering



Passing of the Baton  
(Mary Fitzsimons to Pa Nolan)



John Nolan of Ballytarsna lives on  
(dtrs: Marie, Catherina and Madeline)



Clan Gathering Attendees – Ballykealey House, Co. Carlow (July 23, 2008)

---

## Galway's First Nolan Family – An Overview

Starting in the Middle Ages, as English became more and more the language of business and administration, Gaelic family names were gradually simplified and made more pronounceable and recordable in English. In the old Kingdom of Thomond comprising Clare, Limerick, North Tipperary and part of Offaly, the family name Ó hUllacháin was recorded variously as Holohan and Nolan. The latter rendering was mainly due to a variation on the original Gaelic family name which was sometimes given as “Ní hUllacháin”, meaning “Of the Holohans”.

In Leinster, the Gaelic family name Ó Nualláin was also recorded as O’Nolan. Although not related by blood, descendants of the Ó Nualláin and Ó hUallacháin septs do share a common history going back to the 2nd century when Cathair Mor, then High King of Ireland (120-123 AD) lost his life and kingship at the hands of Conn of the Hundred Battles, a brother of Eochaidh Fionn. In the ensuing turmoil, Cathair Mor's descendants (the Ó hUallacháins, and other septs) and Eochaidh Fionn's descendants (the Ó Nualláins) joined forces and did battle for many years against Conn's son Art (High King: 166-196 AD) and also his grandson Cormac (High King: 227-267 AD).

The first recorded presence of Nolans in Galway goes back to the year 1394 when a tomb to the memory of deceased Nolans of Loughboy was erected in Galway city and subsequently renovated in 1473 by a “Michael O’Nolan” after a fire had destroyed much of the city. The

next record of Nolan presence in the city is for the year 1500 when a “Donell Oge O’Nolloghan”, goldsmith, was given his freedom on condition that he take care of one Andrew Fallon in his old age.

Our next and final jump is to the late 1500s when we find reference to a Thomas Nolan (Tomhas and Ó hUallacháin), a sub-sheriff of Co. Mayo, who, a few years later, in the early 1600s, acquired the castle and lands of Ballinrobe in Co. Mayo, former possessions of the De Burgo family. From this point on subsequent family genealogy is moderately well documented and indicates that the family’s fortunes grew rapidly primarily through the sale of spirits, having obtained in 1616 a lucrative grant to sell spirit over a wide area in Connaught and neighbouring counties.

Based upon documented genealogy since the early 1600s it is quite evident that the De Burgo (DeBergh, Burgho, Bourke, Burke, etc.) and Nolan families were closely allied, intermarrying with one another. The marriage, in the mid 1600s, of Catherine Nolan, granddaughter of Thomas of Ballinrobe and daughter of John of Inniscrone, to Walter Bourke (????-1715), Major General of the Athlone Regiment of Foot and later a Count in France, is a clear testament to this fact. This special relationship between the two families may however have already started as early as 1394. This is suggested by the fact that when the Nolans of Galway city first erected a tomb to their Loughboy ancestors, they erected it in a Franciscan Friary founded by the De Burgo family.

---

# Galway to New Zealand – A Nolan Family’s Journey

## Introduction

The current article is based upon written material and pictures submitted by Wayne Nolan of New Zealand, a new member of our Clan organization and a descendant of a sub-branch of the Galway Nolan family discussed in the preceding article.

For the sake of expediency we also won’t go into details as regards the earlier generations in Wayne’s family tree. These are recorded in a separate document entitled “Ballinderry Nolan Pedigree” by Henry Cecil Nolan. Also, in the interest of privacy the family story stops with Wayne’s grandfather, Oliver Archibald Nolan born in 1874.

## Linking to Earlier Generations

In the Middle Ages, goldsmithing was a lucrative profession and goldsmiths were called upon to perform many of the functions of modern-day bankers, not to mention holding and renting tenements. Based upon the limited evidence presented on Galway Nolans in the preceding article it is believed that that the first Nolan merchant from Loughboy, Co. Kilkenny, in Galway city was a goldsmith and that over time his descendants focused more and more on the financial and legal aspects of the goldsmithing profession, eventually becoming the equivalent of modern-day real estate brokers, bankers and solicitors.

## The Last Generation in Galway

Wayne’s most recent Galway ancestor was a Gregory Nolan of Curry, Co. Galway, who married an Elizabeth

Jennings in 1800 and had a son named Oliver Joseph.

## Two Generations in Dublin

Oliver Joseph Nolan, born in Curry, Co, Galway, in 1816 studied law in Dublin and eventually set up practice there as a solicitor. In 1840 he married Ellen Kennedy and they had three sons, Oliver, Alexander and Archibald and a daughter Sarah.

Alexander, born in 1843, became a seaman and, in 1874, married Sarah Ann Williams in St. Brides church, Dublin. They had altogether three children, Oliver Archibald (1874), Ellen (1876) and Alexina (1878). With Alexander away at sea most of the time, Sarah and her three children seem to have experienced hard times during their early years, the family moving 2 to 3 times within the space of 5 years before Alexander’s untimely death at age 36. After Alexander’s death in 1879, Sarah alone with 3 young children somehow managed to provide for her family until they could provide for themselves. At age 16, in February 1891, Oliver Archibald, the eldest child signed on for a 4-year apprenticeship with a ship’s master (a Robert Conoway) in Mercantile Marine’s Cardiff office.

After completing his apprenticeship he went to sea and, according to family tradition, soon thereafter found himself shipwrecked in the Sargosso Sea. Picked up as a survivor he was then brought to New Zealand.

Presumably sometime after Oliver Archibald’s departure from Dublin in

1891, Sarah, and her two remaining children, Ellen and Alexina, moved to Chelsea, England, where the girls both married. Sarah died in 1925.



[ Sarah with Alexina, Oliver & Ellen ]

### **The First Generation in New Zealand**

In 1904, Oliver Archibald married Elizabeth Mary “Bess” Pascoe at the residence of Richard Pascoe in Lyttelton, New Zealand. That same year he was also appointed as a Signalman at Adderley Head, at the south head of the entrance to Lyttelton Harbour. This signal station used flag signals to advise the now Historic Timeball Station above the Port of Lyttelton of the pending arrival and movements of vessels into and out of Lyttelton Harbour. Little Port Cooper, a former whaling port (c1830-1845) at the south end of the harbour and just inside Adderley Head, is where the signalmen lived.

At the time Oliver and Elizabeth lived in Little Port Cooper (1904-1910), there were only three houses there and the Nolans are believed to have lived in the middle one. The signal station was on top of the hill and the signalmen used to have eight hour shifts at the station. The oncoming signalman would ride a horse up to the station and the signalman going off duty would ride it back down to the bay and the horse spent most of the time in a paddock behind the houses. For fetching supplies the Signalmen would row a dinghy across the harbour to Lyttelton Township, a feat of daring and courage which, at times, would test the hardest of sailors.

Oliver and Elizabeth had five children, the first four being born while the family lived at Little Port Cooper and the last one in Lyttelton. Despite the remote location of Little Port Cooper it is quite possible that the first 4 children were born there given that Elizabeth’s mother, Elizabeth Jane Pascoe, was a midwife and may have gone there to deliver the babies. At least one of the children is known to have been born there.

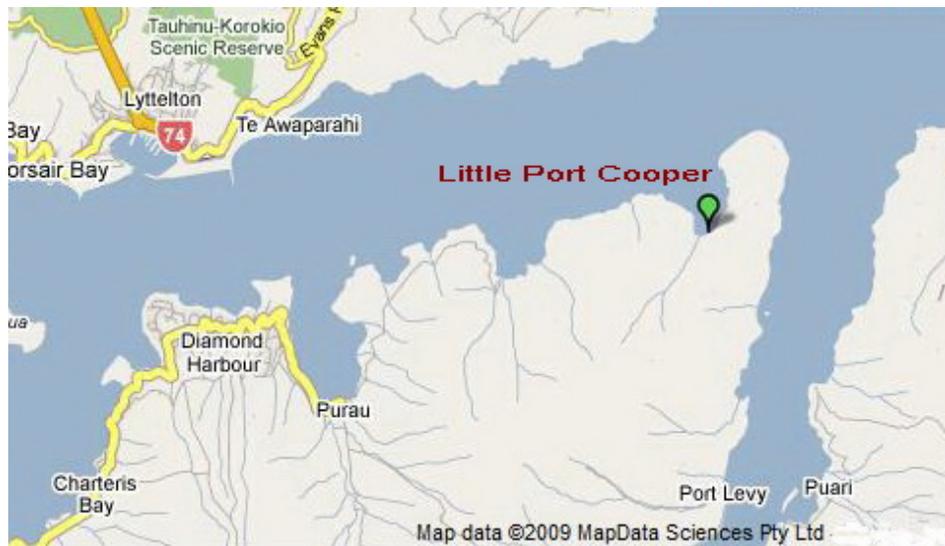
In early 1911 when Wayne’s Dad, Richard, was about six months old and the girls were getting to be of school age, the family moved to Lyttelton and had a house built on Ticehurst Road.

Oliver and Elizabeth’s children, in order, were:

- Eileen Sarah Francis b. 11-Dec-1904
- Jessie Ellen Alexina b. 20-Aug-1906
- Mabe Elizabeth b. 04-Aug-1907
- Richard Alexander b- 19-Aug-1910
- Maurice Archibald b. 21-Jun-1917.



Family of Oliver Archibald Nolan & Elizabeth Mary Pascoe circa 1920  
Left-to-Right: Richard, Elizabeth, Eileen with Maurice in front, Mabe and Jessie



Map showing Lyttelton Harbour, Lyttelton and Little Port Cooper in New Zealand

For those wishing to contact Wayne,  
here are his particulars:

Wayne Nolan of Christchurch, New Zealand;  
Phone 03-980-2438; Mobile 021-180-8259;  
Fax 03-980-2436;  
Email wayne.nolan@paradise.net.nz

*By Roger Nowlan*

---

# The Flight of the Earls – The French-Canadian Connection

## 1607 - Flight of the Earls

In 1607, in the aftermath of a devastating loss by the Irish forces some 4 years earlier, the Gaelic leaders Hugh O'Neill and Rory O'Donnell fled to the Continent in the hope of returning to fight another day, under more favourable conditions. They were accompanied by ninety followers, many of them Ulster noblemen, and some members of their families.

The Earls originally set sail from County Donegal bound for Spain but, on route, changed destination, disembarking in France and proceeding overland to Spanish Flanders. Some in the party remained in Leuven, whilst the main party continued on to Italy. The Earls had planned to return to Ireland and campaign for the recovery of their lands, with the support of Spain, but both died in exile.

## 1641 –Rebellion in Ireland

Originally sparked by Catholic fears of an impending invasion of Ireland by anti-Catholic forces, this rising in October 1641 was an attempted *coup d'état* by the Irish Catholic gentry which ultimately devolved into a civil war lasting into the early 1650s when Oliver Cromwell's army won decisive battles against the Irish Catholics and Royalists. The civil war ended, many Irish lords faced transplantation or exile. Some chose exile.

## 1600s - Lords and Wild Geese in Europe

In 1614, the titles to the lands vacated by the fleeing Irish nobility in 1607 were attained by the English Crown, an act considered by most of the courts of Europe to have been a travesty of justice. Thus, the titles of Irish lords, attained or not, continued to be recognized in the courts of Europe, especially in France and Spain. This practice was maintained throughout the 1600s as more and more noble families of Ireland settled in Catholic France after losing their estates.

Family names for Irish lords known to have chosen exile in France include O'Mahony, O'Kelly, Farrell, Walsh, Hennessy, Phelan, O'Byrne, Lynch, MacCarthy, MacMahon and O'Sullivan.

Starting as early as 1596 many Irish soldiers, referred to in literature as the Wild Geese, found their way into the armies of Europe forming regiments of their own led by Irish patriots.

## Nolan Wild Geese

It is commonly known that, in the aftermath of the Rebellion of 1641 and the subsequent civil war, a Captain James Nolan of the Shangarry Nolans (Co. Carlow) followed Charles I into exile and served in an Irish regiment in Spanish Flanders led by Colonel George Cusack (1656-1662).

A lesser known fact is that a "Nicolas Nolan" served in this same Irish regiment from 1660 to 1662. In February 1660, in Brussels, Nicolas Nolan received a commission in this regiment as Quartermaster serving with the regiment until its disbandment in June 1662. Three months later, in September, we find him in Colonel Thomas O'Meara's regiment (1660-1664), still in Flanders, but now serving as an Adjutant.

## 1663 – Nolan Marriage in New France

On January 29<sup>th</sup> 1663, in Quebec, New France, a Pierre Nolan, born around 1637 and son of a Nicolas Nolan and a Michelle Perrier, married a Catherine Houart (sic Howard). At the time Pierre was a "cabaretier" in lower-town Quebec but also a Paris merchant.

Catherine, his wife, born in Rouen, France, around 1632, was the daughter of Thomas Houart (sic Howard) and Nicole Guérout, also both born in Rouen, France, around 1605.

Based upon the family names involved, i.e. Nolan and Howard, and the historical context given earlier, it appears that both parties to this 1663 marriage in Quebec were grandchildren of Irish nobility who had fled to France sometime after 1603.

Given that, for the time period of interest (1641-1663), we find record of only one Nicolas Nolan with Irish roots in New France, Pierre's father, and one in Continental Europe, Adjutant Nicolas Nolan serving in an Irish regiment in Flanders, it is reasonable to assume that they were one and the same person. That Nicholas Nolan was an Irish nobleman is further reinforced by the fact that within a few years of being in Quebec his son Pierre was granted the title of Sieur Pierre Nolan dit Lechevalier (knight).

In New France, Pierre's fortunes grew rapidly as his children all married into fur-trading families. Pierre himself also periodically returned to Paris where he operated a fur business ("fourrière"). By 1750, shortly before the fall of New France, Pierre's grandson Charles Henri Nolan (1694-1754), was one of the most influential fur merchants in Montreal, reputed to have sent the most voyagers to the west and the farthest.

## **Probable Family Linkage back to Ireland**

Based upon my knowledge of Nolan family history in Ireland and the use of first names in the various Nolan family lines, I would hazard to say that Pierre Nolan's grandfather was of the Ballykealey Nolan line, a descendant of Cahir (anglicized Charles) O'Nolan, one of the last Nolan Clan chiefs in the old Gaelic order in the mid 1500s.

The reader will recall that Charles was the name given to one of Pierre's grandsons. The name of Pierre's father, i.e. Nicolas/Nicholas, was also associated with the Ballykealey Nolan line as demonstrated by the fact that, in the late 1700s, we find a Reverend Doctor Nicholas Nowlan, assigned to the local Ballon parish church, leasing several hundred acres of land next to the Ballykealey estate.

## **Closing Remarks**

The story of the early fur-trading Nolans in New France was certainly an eye-opener for me, making me realize that, as more and more information from the past becomes available from all the various places where Nolans settled around the world we are likely to discover more hidden chapters of our Nolan ancestors' past.

*By Roger Nowlan*

---

## **Philip Nolan – Wild West Hero**

Texas, the Lone Star state of the American West, immortalized thirty year old Philip Nolan when it named a county after this contraband horse trader who died with his gang in a gun shoot-out with Mexican authorities in 1801.

Philip Nolan (1771-1801), son of Peter Nolan and Elizabeth Cassidy of Belfast, Ireland, defied the decree of the King of Spain forbidding the capture of wild horses for sale across the Mexican border.

Nolan's untimely death along with the slaughter of all the English speaking defenders of the Alamo mission in the town of San Antonio became rallying cries for Texas independence by 1835.

*By Dave Nolan*

---

## A Few Irish Proverbs to Enjoy as you celebrate St. Patrick's Day



- *"Coimh ad fearg fhear na foighde"*  
Beware of the anger of a patient man.
- *"Meallan muilt  d  go mall ach meallan siad go mion."*  
God's mill may grind slowly, but it grinds finely.
- *"Dafheabhas e an t-ol is e an tart a dheireadh."*  
Good as drink is, it ends in thirst.
- *"N  bhionn airgead amad in i bhfad ina ph ca"*  
A fool's money is not long in his pocket.
- *"N ior bhris focal maith fiacail riamh"*  
A good word never broke a tooth.
- *"Is maith an t-anlann an t-ocras."*  
Hunger is the best sauce.
- *"Is minic a bhris beal duine a shron."*  
It's often a person's mouth breaks his nose.
- *"Maireann croi eadrom i bhfad."*  
A merry heart lives long.
- Three things come without asking: fear, jealousy, and love.
- If a cat had a dowry, she would often be kissed.
- A scholars ink lasts longer than a martyrs blood.
- A change of work is as good as a rest.
- A spender gets the property of the hoarder.
- Cheerfulness is a sign of wisdom.
- An ounce of breeding is worth a pound of feeding.  
- *Horse racing expression meaning that thoroughbreds are born and not made.*
- The day will come when the cow will have use for her tail.
- May you live as long as you want, and never want as long as you live.
- Necessity knows no law.

---

# In Sickness and Health

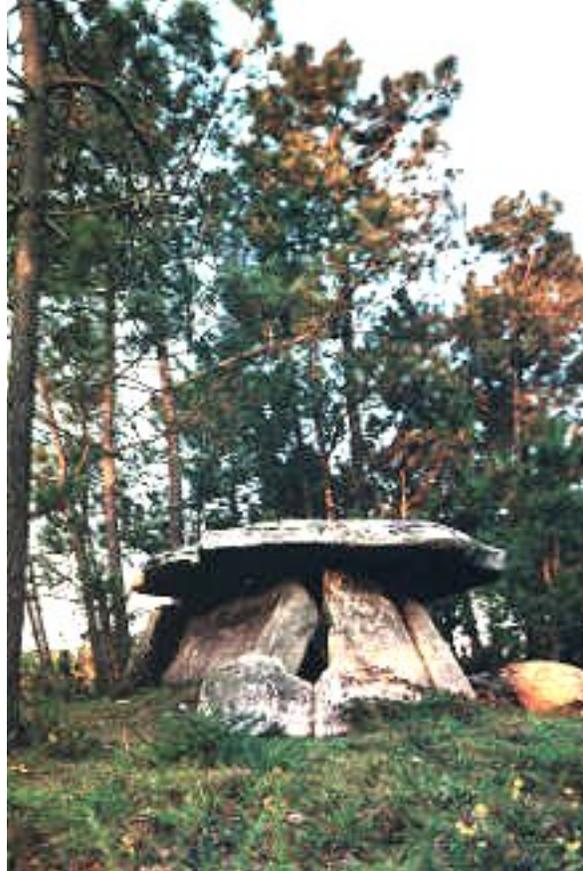
## A Valiant Warrior Remembered

Richard Nolan (1918-2008), of Burlington, N.J. This Philadelphia, Pennsylvania born and decorated World War II veteran is survived by his widow (née Nancy Bilbrough), four sons (Gregory, Francis, Kevin, and Thomas), two daughters (Helene Ives and Chris Moran), thirty-three grandchildren, and one great grandchild with two on the way.

His 79th Division of the U.S. Army landed on the seventh day of the D-Day invasion and suffered casualties over 400% of its authorized size from establishing the Normandy beach head to its crossing the Rhine River into Germany. Corporal Dick Nolan, though he suffered a leg wound from a German tank machine gun on July 4, 1944, chose to return to his scouting unit rather than receive an extended recovery back in the States. After receiving a purple heart medal for his wound, he earned a Silver Star medal for rescuing his wounded comrades from a building under mortar attack and a Bronze Star in a dangerous crossing of the Rhine near Duisburg.

Dick Nolan was an activist in the right to life movement and taught Catachismics.

*By Dave Nolan*



# O'Nolan Clan Ò Nuallàin

## Membership Application / Renewal Form



I wish to join ( *or renew my membership # \_\_\_\_\_ in* ) the O'Nolan Clan, a voluntary, non-profit organisation, relying upon its members for fund-raising, organizing clan activities and recruiting new members.

I understand that membership is open to anyone who supports the goals and aspirations of the clan:

- To organize a Clan Gathering every second year
- To publish a Clan Newsletter at least once a year
- To create and maintain, for current and future generations, an archive of historical and anecdotal information of interest to Nolans everywhere.

I also understand that membership dues are to be paid upon joining and, thereafter, at the beginning of each calendar year, prior to March 17. The yearly membership fee per household, in known **local currencies** of interest, is currently: set at 10 Euros, \$13 USD, \$15 CAD or \$17 AUD. For other local currencies, the membership fee is the equivalent of 10 Euros in that currency. To save on postage and service charges, I may also choose to pay for more than one year at a time.

Enclosed is a **personal cheque in my local currency made out to "Sean Nolan - Nolan Clan"** in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ as payment for \_\_\_\_\_ year(s) membership in the clan.

For clan records and to help with administration, my particulars (*or revisions thereto*) are:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Co./State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Country/Postal/ZIPCode \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Other family members \_\_\_\_\_

### Post To:

Sean Nolan, Nolan Clan Treasurer  
Rathnarrin, Ardattin,  
Tullow, Co. Carlow,  
Republic of Ireland  
Tel: +353 5991 55666