



Queensland Irish Association

# Newsletter

August 2024

## Vale Sandy Campbell, former Pipe Major and QIA stalwart

I am saddened to announce the loss of one of our precious Life Members, Sandy Campbell, former Pipe Major of the Queensland Irish Association Pipe Band and a stalwart of the QIA.

His funeral service will be held on Friday, 6th September at 1pm at Gregson and Weight, 159 Wisers Road, Buderim, QLD 4556. May he rest in peace.

We have many upcoming events to share with you.

### SEPTEMBER LUNCH

Members are urged to attend the second Members Lunch to be held at the Coorparoo RSL. The September Lunch will be held on Wednesday 18th September, for all Members and their friends, at Coorparoo RSL from 11.30am to 2.30pm. Food and drink will be available for purchase and seniors' specials will be available. RSVP to Mavis Williams on 3849 8271 before 11th September. We really would like a large attendance at this important luncheon.

### NORMANBY HOTEL DRINKS

There will be QIA September Members Drinks at The Normanby Hotel, Red Hill. Again, we would very much like a large group of Members and their friends to attend. On Friday, 20th September, we will meet from 4pm to 6pm. Members drinks will be held in the upstairs room, which is on the Waterworks Road level. Food and drinks will be available to purchase.



Vale Sandy Campbell. Pictures: Supplied, with thanks to Robert Ward, Paul Hogan and Queensland Irish Association Pipe Band.\*

### BRISBANE CELTIC FESTIVAL

Brisbane Celtic Festival will be held on Sunday, 13th October 2024, from 9.30am to 4pm at Moorlands Park, off Coronation Drive, Auchenflower. There will be food and drinks available to purchase and entertainment galore! Be sure to avail of the 50c public transport fares, as parking is limited. The site is serviced by nearby buses, trains and ferries.

### FURTHER FUNCTIONS

There will be an October Members Lunch on Wednesday, 16th October from 11.30am to 2.30pm at Coorparoo RSL. Food and drinks, and senior specials lunches, will be available to purchase. RSVP to Mavis Williams on 3849 8271 before 9th October.



Members and Friends Drinks will be held at The Normanby Hotel in Red Hill on Friday, 18th October from 4pm to 6pm. And there will be a further get-together at The Normanby on Friday, 8th November from 4pm to 6pm.

*Continued on page 2*



It's not all fun and games for QIA Dancers, but they deserved to let their hair down after all their hard work securing medals and a title at the AIDA Irish Dancing State Championships. We love your spirit, well done! Picture: [Facebook/QIADancers](#)

There will be a further lunch at Coorparoo RSL on Wednesday, 20th November from 11.30am to 2.30pm. Food and drink will be available at Member's cost, including senior special lunch. RSVP is required to Mavis Williams on 3849 8271 before 13th November.

Finally, the QIA Christmas Party will be held on Sunday, 8th December at Wests Rugby Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong, starting at 12 noon. Food and drinks will be available to purchase. RSVP to Mavis Williams on 3849 8271 by 1st December.

### QUEENSLAND IRISH ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

ALL MEMBERS are needed for the Queensland Irish Association AGM on Saturday, 9th November 2024 at 11am, with lunch to follow. The AGM this year will be held at Coorparoo RSL. Food and drink will be available to purchase. Your attendance is really needed to ensure we have a quorum for this important AGM.

It will soon be time to nominate for membership of the Board of the Queensland Irish Association. Members with more than 15 months' standing are invited to nominate for the positions of President, Vice President and Treasurer, and there are six other positions

as a Director of the Queensland Irish Association. People can nominate for one only of the three nominated positions, or for a position as one of the six Directors. Nominations open on Friday, 6th September 2024 and close on Friday, 10th October 2024.

Nomination forms and associated documents can be obtained from the Secretary of the Association, Claire Moore. Her email address is [claire\\_moore@bigpond.com](mailto:claire_moore@bigpond.com).

### IRISH DANCING

QIA was proud to be the Silver Sponsor of the Queensland State Irish Dancing Championships earlier this month. Our director Claire Moore presented the prize for the Under 19 Ladies section. Well done to all the wonderful dancers who took part in the championships in Sunnybank.

I would really like a large crowd to attend the Coorparoo lunch on Wednesday, 18th September and an equally large crowd to attend the Members and Friends Drinks at The Normanby Hotel on Friday, 20th September.

**Jeff Spender,  
President,  
Queensland Irish Association.**

\*Sincere apologies to the Campbell and Booth families. The original photograph supplied was incorrect.

## Calendar

**Wednesday, 18th September,  
11.30am to 2.30pm.**

QIA Members Lunch, Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth St, Coorparoo. RSVP by 11th Sept to Mavis Williams, 3849 8271.

**Friday, 20th September, 4pm to 6pm.**

QIA Members Drinks, Normanby Hotel, 1 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill.

**Sunday, 13th October, 9.30am to 4pm.**

Brisbane Celtic Festival, Moorlands Park, Auchenflower.

**Wednesday, 16th October, 11.30am to 2.30pm.**

QIA Members Lunch, Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth St, Coorparoo. RSVP by 9th Oct to Mavis Williams, 3849 8271.

**Friday, 18th October, 4pm to 6pm.**

QIA Members Drinks, Normanby Hotel, 1 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill.

**Sunday, 3rd November.**

2024 Irish Community November Gold Coast Remembrance Mass at St Joseph The Worker Church, Labrador. More details to come.

**Friday, 8th November, 4pm to 6pm.**

QIA Members Drinks, Normanby Hotel, 1 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill.

**Saturday, 9th November, 11am to 2.30pm.**

QIA AGM and Members Lunch, Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth St, Coorparoo.

**Wednesday, 20th November,  
11.30am to 2.30pm.**

QIA Members Lunch, Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth St, Coorparoo. RSVP by 13th Nov to Mavis Williams, 3849 8271.

**Sunday, 8th December, from 12pm.**

QIA Christmas Party, Wests Rugby Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong.

More events are available on our Facebook group, which you can join [here](#).

---

---

# Brisbane's first Celtic festival blossoming in Auchenflower



The inauguration of the Celtic Nations Monument in Moorlands Park in 2023. Pictures: Mary Allen

Step into a world of rich heritage and vibrant traditions at the first-ever Brisbane Celtic Festival!

Celebrate the magic of the Celtic Nations with a spectacular lineup of events and activities, all set against the majestic backdrop of the Celtic Nations Monument in Moorlands Park, Auchenflower. This festival will

celebrate the rich culture of the eight Celtic Nations: Ireland, Isle of Man, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, Asturias, and Galicia.

Entertainment will include Irish music and Highland dancing, children's Celtic games, including the cabre toss, and a Scottish Country Dance performance.

Make sure to wear your tartan, kilts and Celtic attire to add a touch of authenticity and flair to the festivities!

Don't miss this extraordinary celebration of Celtic culture, bringing together the best of music, dance, and tradition.

Organisers strongly recommend public transport as parking will be limited.

The event, organised by Celtic Council Australia Queensland, is free of charge and will be held on Sunday, 13th October at 503 Coronation Drive, Auchenflower. Details [here](#).

Auchenflower is a fitting location for a Celtic festival. The name has a distinctly Scottish origin. It is derived from the Gaelic words "achadh" (field) and "flùr" (flower), which together can be translated as "field of flowers." The area was named by Thomas McIlwraith, a Scottish-born premier of Queensland in the late 19th Century, who had a property in the area and named it after Auchenflower House, his family estate in Scotland.



# Entertainment

## History Alive reviving after five-year hiatus

Hold on to your helmets and dust off your time machines! The Abbeystone team is thrilled to announce that History Alive is making its grand return this September 7th and 8th in partnership with the Queensland Living History Federation.

After a hiatus since 2019, this iconic event is back and bigger than ever, showcasing an epic journey through time from Ancient Rome to World War Two.

Prepare for a weekend bursting with excitement and adventure! Witness the thundering hooves and clashing lances in thrilling jousting tournaments, marvel at the fierce combat displays, try your hand at archery, and get an up-close look at ancient machines.

Dive into hands-on workshops and be amazed by the skillful demonstrations of historical crafts. The dramatic main arena performances



are not to be missed, and the vibrant atmosphere will be further elevated by talented musicians and street performers.

Step into the past as you explore the bustling Abbeystone marketplace, where the sights, sounds, and aromas of history come alive.

This is just a taste of the immersive experience awaiting you. And for all you food lovers, prepare to feast on an array of culinary delights from various historical eras.

Don't miss out on the Moreton Bay Joust Spectacular, a fan-favourite that sells out fast.

Visit [Ticketebo](https://www.ticketebo.com) or call 1800 381 939 to secure your spot at this historical extravaganza.

For updates, check out the Abbeystone website at [abbeystone.com](https://www.abbeystone.com).

Abbeystone is located at 579 Old Toorbul Point Road, Caboolture, QLD 4510.

## An afternoon of Celtic Magic with Australian Celtic Women

Experience the magic of Celtic music with the Australian Celtic Women's show, Celtic Magic, at the Sandgate Town Hall on Saturday, 28th September at 2pm.

Immerse yourself in a journey through misty moors and rolling hills as the all-female musical ensemble brings together some of your favourite songs from Ireland, Scotland, Wales and the Isle of Man.

More than just a 'Celtic band', be prepared for a show that combines the richness of Celtic instruments (harp, fiddle, bagpipes, bodhran, cello, keys, drums,



tin whistles) with three classically trained singers; to provide an unforgettable performance full of warmth,

memories, laughs, dancing, exhilaration and more.

Formed to celebrate Australia's unique Celtic heritage

and showcase the talent of women in Celtic music, the group come from diverse backgrounds in opera, musical theatre, folk, rock, pop and Celtic genres.

Their harmonies, described as "out of this world", combine award-winning expertise from various musical and performance disciplines.

Grab your friends and family and spend the afternoon enjoying live Celtic music in beautiful Sandgate, Queensland.

Tickets are now available by clicking on [Trybooking.com/CTXCP](https://www.trybooking.com/CTXCP).

---

---

# Brisbane Exhibition Special Lunch at Coorparoo RSL



# Cork writer Cónal Creedon to get prestigious award



Cónal Creedon. Picture: Paul Reardon

Cork writer Cónal Creedon has been named as the first Irish artist who will receive the prestigious The World Cultural Council (WCC) Award for Arts in its 40-year existence.

It was announced in Switzerland that the WCC Award for Arts 2024 will be awarded to novelist, playwright and filmmaker Cónal at a ceremony on October 23rd at McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

The WCC is an international organisation founded in 1982 with a membership of 124 distinguished scientists and scholars, university presidents and executives from the five continents, including several Nobel laureates.

Cónal has been awarded the Leonardo da Vinci World Award of Arts 2024.

Cónal Creedon is an award-winning novelist, short-story writer, playwright, documentary film maker, essayist, and collaborative artist. His

creative practice is described as an exploration of ‘the spaghetti bowl of streets’ in downtown Cork city, Ireland – where his family has lived and traded for over a hundred years. His detailed investigation of such a tight-knit neighbourhood reveals insights into the universal nature of the human condition and constitutes a significant contribution to the artistic legacy of creative expression.

The WCC Jury members were also impressed by the diversity of Cónal’s artistic practice, reaching back over thirty years and across various media including: publication, theatre, film, radio, music, live performance, and collaboration with other artists. When examined in its entirety, his diverse output becomes a single cohesive body of work that resonates far beyond the inner-city streets of his native Cork. As a guest speaker at universities and literary festivals, Cónal continues to tour his

work to USA, China and Europe. With extracts of his work translated into Bulgarian, German, Italian and Chinese, Cónal’s international appeal is not restricted to English-speaking communities. The global appeal of Cónal’s work becomes self-evident in the apparent ease and affability of his interaction with diverse international audiences. But above all, it is the quality of his writing that shines through.

In the words of reviewer Malachy McCourt: “Good writing knows no nationality ..., [this] is excellent writing, very personal, very humorous. They say if Dublin was burnt down, it could be rebuilt again by reading the work of James Joyce – well the very same could be said about Creedon’s work – Cork city could be built from his words.”

Cónal’s creative output has received international recognition, including

*Continued on page 7*

# Cork writer Cónal Creedon to get prestigious award



**Cónal Creedon and Jude.**

*Continued from page 6*

the Eric Hoffer Award USA 2020 and the IP Gold Award USA 2023. His stage plays have been produced in the UK, Shanghai and New York to high critical acclaim and have received several awards at the Irish Theatre Awards New York. His latest collection of short stories was awarded One City One Book and is on record as the most borrowed adult fiction book from the library service in 2022. His film documentaries have had public screenings in New York and World Expo Shanghai 2010. During the Covid restrictions, Cónal remained busy, streaming online over 30 literary podcasts, films, stage plays, lectures, readings, interviews as well as collaborations with universities in India. In addition, Cónal has writ-

ten more than 60 hours of original radio drama, broadcast by RTE, BBC, CBC, and ABC.

In his home city of Cork, Ireland, Cónal's contribution to the arts continues to be recognized. In 2016 he was presented as Writer-in-Residence at University College Cork (UCC) and was subsequently inducted as adjunct Professor of Creative Writing to the School of English and Digital Humanities (UCC). Nominated Person of the Year in 2001 and 2018, Cónal was appointed Cultural Ambassador for Cork City in 2020 and awarded Cork City Lord Mayor's Cultural Award.

The members of the WCC Jury were happy to conclude that whether as a cultural or goodwill ambassador, a keynote speaker or simply a

guest, Cónal Creedon never fails to bring humour and warmth with his insightful and entertaining words. As one nominator remarked,

“Cónal brings beauty and truth wherever he chooses to be.”

Cónal Creedon latest book Spaghetti Bowl will be published this September.

It has also been announced: At the Irish American Heritage Centre, Chicago USA, on 15th November 2024 Cónal will be honoured at the Irish Books Arts Music Awards with the iBAM Award for Literature 2024

Previous recipients of the iBAM Award include: Maeve Binchy, Frank McCourt, John B Keane, Marian Keyes, Colm McCann, Colm Tobin.

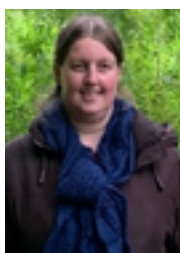
To find out more about Cónal, go to [www.conalcreedon.com](http://www.conalcreedon.com).

# Groves, hills and mounds as bridges between worlds



Large yew tree in the churchyard of St Peter and St Paul Church in Boughton, Kent. The tree has been traced back to its donation to the Church in 1695. Picture: [Wikimedia Commons](#)

**Author Joanne McFall explores how aspects of the landscape were sacred to the ancient Celts.**



The landscapes of Britain and Ireland have much in common, a shared Celtic history and heritage. The Celtic people who lived on the lands of Britain and Ireland helped to shape the structure, traditions and culture of each land. Much of contemporary folklore has its roots in a Celtic way of life which spanned thousands of years.

***Groves, Hills and Mounds: Bridges between Above and Below Groves***

Trees, groves and forests were of particular spiritual significance to the Celtic way of life and even more so to the lives of spiritual practitioners such as druids, healers, mystics and seers. While many trees had to be cleared to enable new communities to be built and land to be used, many individual trees and groves associated with the druids and spiritual realm were left as they were. It is believed in Celtic folklore that the Celts even centred their religion in the forests.

There are countless numbers of individual trees and groves across Britain and Ireland that are still standing today which may once have been sites of religious worship and spiritual practices. The ceremonies and traditions of contemporary spiritual practitioners

originated from those of their Celtic ancestors. Today many sacred groves such as Yew groves are enclosed within Church grounds, whether in ruins or still in use. Trees were regarded as having immense spiritual power and importance. Their branches reached high into the sky, their trunks were connected to the earth and their roots were connected to both the earth and the underground.

The circle was a sacred symbol in ancient Celtic belief which has survived in contemporary folklore from the passing down of superstitions, myths and associations through each generation. The druids had preferences for circular structures which they utilised in their practices. Groves such as yew, oak and

*Continued on page 9*



# Groves, hills and mounds as bridges between worlds

*Continued from page 8*

hazelwood became associated with Druid ceremonies and particular groves became known as places of religious worship.

Trees were believed to be both physical and spiritual abodes of sacred power, knowledge and practices. The tree could connect to both the tangible physical land and otherworldly realms instantaneously. There was an awareness that roots could reach deep within the earth and so have the ability to tap into unseen powers. In this way the tree was a natural bridge between above and below, between the seen and the unseen.

Ancient druid groves were known as nemetons which were the sole domains of these religious people most revered by the Celts. Many were inscribed with Ogham which may have marked their association with the druids and so were not to be interfered with. Even though there are few archeological remains of druid groves apart from discovered votive offerings, inscriptions and shrines they will always be recognised in Celtic folklore for their great physical and spiritual importance.

The area around trees and many trees themselves were believed to contain portals to other realms such as that of the deceased, the gods and the faeries. Given their close association with the spirit world it is interesting to observe how many Church buildings and graveyards have been built around or in close proximity to trees, particularly the yew, oak and ash in contemporary times. Even today just as in times past many people will not damage, take from or cut down trees in specific locations or that are believed to be connected to the spirit and faery realms.

As well as providing practical resources such as shelter, medicinal uses for healing and physical landmarks, groves were also places of transformation where particular individuals or the initiated could experience spiritual transformation. This may have taken the form of spiritual quest, invoking the surrounding natural essence or perhaps even in unique encounters with other realms. Belief in unseen worlds was a major part of Celtic life. This belief could effect or affect harmony and balance with the spirit world - something that was of great importance to



The Navan Fort in Armagh, Northern Ireland. Picture: [Giuseppe Milo/Wikimedia Commons](#)

the Celts and especially to the druids. In depth spiritual beliefs and practices were the domain of the druids in the ancient Celtic world. It may have been that people, for the most part, kept their distance or had to keep their distance from places and practices associated with the druids. Some 'bands' of druids may have initiated apprentices from outside of their circles while others may have remained closed.

Trees and groves that were near or surrounded by water were believed to be of particular importance to the druids. Water was both present on the earth's surface but could also reach deep within the underground just like the roots of a tree. Many Celtic offerings have been discovered over the years in lakes and rivers throughout Britain and Ireland. As well as land and forests being removed to provide more living and farming space many forests and groves were also destroyed by Roman invaders. There have been many Roman accounts of ancient druid rituals and ceremonies that took place in groves such as those recorded by the poet Lucan. Although the druids and Celts were not always presented in the best of ways by the Romans it is clear to see from any account the great reverence and belief that they had in the natural world. This included many other types of landscape such as mounds and hills. Just like the tree and pools of water, the hill possessed the power to reach into

the heavens, connect to the earth and provide pathways to spiritual realms and the underground.

## *Hills*

Areas of land both natural and human made that had raised or elevated status were highly revered by the ancient Celts. Hills were places of rugged sacred space while also serving as home to chieftains (tribal leaders) and watch towers for warriors. Many forts were built on hills such as those of Navan and Armagh in Ireland. Many ancient artefacts such as pottery, swords and carvings have been found on hills across Britain and Ireland. Hills provided people from all walks of life whether farmer, druid or warrior, with sights and sounds of the land for many miles. Important settlement sites and ceremonial tribal centres were founded on hills such as Cnoc na Shee and Ardpatrick hill in Ireland. The Celts had a natural and learned awareness that these areas of national landscape were both elevated and exposed that reached to the heavens yet were also deeply connected to the earth.

One of the most sacred hills in all of Britain and Ireland is located in the midlands of Ireland - in the very heart of the land, in the mythical 'fifth' province. Its geographical location is 'above' and 'looking over' the surrounding landscape, placing it on an

*Continued on page 10*

# Groves, hills and mounds as bridges between worlds

*Continued from page 9*

important 'spiritual pedestal'. It has become known as 'Uisneach Mide' - Centre Uisneach - due to its symbolic midpoint and connection to Midhe the druid. The hill is imbued with ancient myth and folklore south-west Britain. It is a pre-Roman artificial chalk hill believed to be a place of ceremony containing many sealed tombs. It is believed to have been constructed to be in alignment with planets and purposefully built at the head of a river. Nearby Avebury hill and Malvern hills are also significant as they contain enclosed ceremonial spaces which were mainly used for occasional gatherings. As well as containing stone circles, forts and tombs, many of the sacred hills also contain underground passageways and sources of water. Human constructed hills and mounds revealed the great impact of hills on ancient Celtic society and people.

Constructing them served as a way of paying homage and displaying admiration for all the many national hills across the land. Whether natural or human made the hill was regarded as being of extreme spiritual importance.

In ancient Celtic culture hills were associated with royalty and the faery realm. Hills that contained ring forts indicated status and spiritual activity. Hills such as the Hill of Tara in Ireland have become associated with much myth and legend connected to the Celtic world.

Hills and mountains contained the sources of rivers which the druids believed to be of immense spiritual significance. Faeries, spirits and even the gods and goddesses were believed to dwell within the hills and mountains. In Celtic society the druids were known to have the ability of connecting with both the physical and spiritual realms. It was most likely that many tribal leaders would consult the druids about building on hills and how or where to hold particular gatherings. To this day it is regarded as being disrespectful to the faery and spirit realms to build on or even to climb certain hills. Hills that contain specific features such as circles of trees, standing stones or stone circles are viewed as special and sacred.

Hills were important landmarks in



Maes Howe on the Orkney Islands. Picture: [Rob Burke/CC BY-SA 2.0/Wikimedia Commons](#)

ancient Celtic society as they were connected to a particular landscape or time of year. Tribes that were nomadic as well as settled knew which hills were isolated and which ones contained festivities, settlements or ceremonial activity.

They also knew which ones were to be respected and left alone such as the ones most associated with the faery and spirit realms. Hills such as Bodmin Moor in England marked special routes for people engaged in seasonal migration. Many important seasonal events were held on hills such as at the time of summer and winter solstice, spring and autumn equinox, Beltane and Samhain. Hills were major focal points not only for local tribes but also for tribes who travelled from one part of the land to the other on specific occasions.

Hills varied in type from chalk to stone, natural to human-made, utilised to isolated. Over time each one became associated with a particular landscape or way of life. Many hills and mounds were interconnected as they contained underground passageways, tunnels and caves.

Megaliths such as the ones found on Mount Sandel in Ireland were created for social and burial purposes and were mainly found on hills. Other important monuments found on hills include dolmens, ringforts and ceremonial grounds. Many ring and faery forts contained underground storage areas

which were greatly revered. As well as offering protection and sanctuary they were also believed to signify entrances to otherworldly or spirit realms. Ring barrows were places of burial on hills that may have indicated social status. The great interest in and respect for hills and mounds held by Celtic society reveals their great awareness of space, height and use of land. As a type of replica or miniature hill a mound was also another important feature of landscape - one that could be natural or built by humans for specific requirements or purposes in the ancient Celtic world.

## *Mounds*

Mounds were believed to be extremely important areas of landscape in ancient Celtic times.

This belief has remained throughout the generations to contemporary times in British and Irish folklore. Just like hills and mountains, mounds could be natural or human made and each one was associated with a particular purpose. Natural mounds were believed to contain the presence of gods, goddesses and faeries. They could also serve as portals to the otherworld and were connected to the underground at their base. Human created mounds served as places of worship, gatherings and could serve as burial sites. Many mounds were left as they were, revered and admired from afar while other mounds were

*Continued on page 11*

# Groves, hills and mounds as bridges between worlds

*Continued from page 10*

walked upon by various tribal members. The ancient Celts believed that souls and spirits could reside within burial mounds and that many mounds were the dwelling places of inhabitants of the spiritual realm, such as faeries. To this day many mounds across Britain and Ireland are associated with the dead / faery folk and so are treated with the utmost awe and caution.

Mounds were regarded as being deeply connected to the underground and many contain physical or spiritual spaces such as chambers, tunnels and portals that led deep within the earth. Mounds led the way to passageways and chambers both within the mound and deeper into the underground.

The mounds of Maes Howe on the Orkney Islands contain developed passage graves.

The mounds of Newgrange in Ireland which is a much older ancient site contained passage graves where the dead were cremated. Many mounds also contain tomb shrines. Various social groups within tribes formed their own tomb shrines and it is widely believed that they were reserved for the social elite. It may have been that only the bones of the most important families were preserved which may have been moved between tomb shrines to forge new or stronger relationships between groups.

Many mounds could serve as forts and watchtowers enabling a view of the surrounding landscape. Many mounds may have been present across the lands in pre-Celtic times and so the Celts incorporated beliefs and traditions associated with them. Some of the most important types of mounds were burial, barrow and faery. Mounds were also associated with royalty in the form of high status spirits and ancestors and so particular homes or settlements would be built near them. The realms of the gods, goddesses and faeries were associated with royalty in the ancient Celtic mindset. Sacred sites such as mounds were regarded as being 'transition' or portal points between known and unknown worlds. In contemporary Celtic folklore, beliefs and practices this connection is still in place with mounds associated with being one of the most important abodes of spirit realms. As the druids were believed to have the closest links



Entrance to Oweynagat (the Cave of Cats), a souterrain at Rathcroghan neolithic site, County Roscommon. In Irish mythology it is known as the gateway to the underworld, the birthplace of Queen Maedhbh and where the Morrigan emerges at Samhain to spread winter. Picture: [Gillaween/Wikimedia Commons](#)

with spiritual realms it may have been these religious figures who advised tribes and communities on appropriate uses and behaviours associated with mounds.

One of the most important mounds associated with Celtic mythology and folklore in Ireland is Rathcroghan. It is a flat topped mound surrounded by an enclosure. It contains the mystical Oweynagat - cave of cats - strongly associated with the spirit realms and the time of Samhain - Halloween. It was regarded as being connected to the underground and to the otherworld. Belief in the underground as both a physical and spiritual space was part of the Celtic subconscious where ancestral spaces were regarded as being sacred. This belief remains an extremely important one in contemporary Celtic folklore where interest and reverence is held in the unseen as well as the seen. While some regarded the otherworld as being the abode of deceased beings the dominant belief in Celtic culture was that it was the realm of the supernatural, gods and goddesses. Common belief held that it was both deep beneath the earth and within features of the earth itself such as groves, hills and mounds.

On mounds such as Maes Howe in Orkney and on Anglesey many ancient artefacts such as pottery, plaques and swords were found - indications of burial sites and places of offerings.

Many mounds across Britain and Ireland have forts and tombs buried within them and many ancient archaeological monuments have been found there. Many mounds are located near a source of water such as springs, wells,

rivers or lakes. They are one of the most important features of landscape and sacred sites associated with Celtic folklore and mythology in Britain and Ireland. Mounds are widely believed to be neolithic burial mounds once honoured by the Celtic people who attributed much mythology and folklore to them. It was a major Celtic belief that gods, goddesses, faeries and a mystical ancient race known as the Tuatha de Danann inhabited mounds and were present around them. Folklore connected to Celtic mythology advises that interaction between humans and spirits of the supernatural realms could be beneficial or dangerous. The godly / faery dimensions had different rules, traditions and expectations which had to be adhered to and respected by all humans. This is why the druids, seers and healers played such an important role in ancient Celtic society as they were believed to have the most powerful relationship with spirit realms.

Even in contemporary Celtic beliefs and practices great admiration and respect is shown towards people who still merge this old way of life with a new one. It was part of ancient Celtic belief that people could be 'taken' at will by beings from the spirit realms and brought to places such as groves, hills and mounds - possibly for the rest of their lives. It was also believed that spirit deities could assume human form, temporarily departing from their sacred space to live amongst humans.

Read more from Irish author Joanne McFall at [beyondtheforestfloor.weebly.com/](http://beyondtheforestfloor.weebly.com/)

# The Ireland Funds Australia Luncheon in St Lucia



The Ireland Funds Australia who held a wonderful luncheon earlier this month in St Lucia. Among the attendees were many of our members. This picture shows, from left, Joe Thompson, Des Ryan, Gabrielle Thompson, QIA Vice President Seamus Sullivan, QIA Director Paul Hogan and QIA Director Michele Burke.



## Contact us

We welcome content from Members and friends in this newsletter.

If you have news or an article you would like to see included, email the editor, our public relations officer Mary Allen, at [mary@queenslandirish.com.au](mailto:mary@queenslandirish.com.au)

You can also reach us through our website, [www.queenslandirish.com.au](http://www.queenslandirish.com.au), and on our social media pages.

Another great way to interact with QIA is by joining our Facebook [group](#), Queensland Irish Association Friends and Supporters.

Editor and designer: Mary Allen.

DISCLAIMER: Opinions expressed by contributors in articles, advertisements or any other published material in Queensland Irish Association Newsletter are those of the individual contributors and are not necessarily those of the Queensland Irish Association Newsletter. The editor reserves the right to accept, reject, edit or amend submitted material in order to make it appropriate or suitable for publication. To gain permission to reprint any material that appears in this newsletter, contact [newsletter@queenslandirish.com](mailto:newsletter@queenslandirish.com). Queensland Irish Association Newsletter takes no responsibility for products or services advertised in this newsletter.



# Queensland Irish Association

## *September Members' Lunch*



Members and Friends are invited to join us on

Wednesday, September 18th

from 11.30am to 2.30pm at

**Coorparoo RSL,  
45 Holdsworth Street, Coorparoo.**

Food and drinks available to purchase  
Seniors Specials available

RSVP by September 11th to Mavis Williams on 3849 8271



# Queensland Irish Association

## *September Get-Together Drinks*



Members and friends are invited to join us on  
Friday, September 20th  
from 4pm to 6pm at

*The Lounge Bar, The Normanby Hotel,  
Red Hill, Brisbane*

Food and drinks available to purchase  
The bar is on the Waterworks Road level

*1 Musgrave Rd, Red Hill, Brisbane. Parking (on-site) at 18 Kelvin Grove Rd, Kelvin Grove.*

# ANGLO CELTIC

ENGLAND • IRELAND • SCOTLAND • WALES • CELTIC NATIONS • ENGLAND • IRELAND • SCOTLAND • WALES • CELTIC NATIONS



## DON'T MISS OUT!

Australia's only national magazine that covers the Irish, Celtic and British communities. And it's FREE!

Online entertainment magazine and gig guides published monthly and free to read and download.

Subscribe on our website to receive emails when we publish new stories.

Affordable advertising rates for your business.

Published by Irish editor Mary Allen in Queensland. Email Mary at [editor@angloandceltic.com](mailto:editor@angloandceltic.com).

# READ IT NOW ON OUR WEBSITE

[www.angloandceltic.com](http://www.angloandceltic.com)