



Queensland Irish Association

Newsletter

October 2024

Get your proxy in for our Annual General Meeting

IMPORTANT: FILL IN YOUR PROXY!

Saturday, 9th November 2024 is the most important date for QIA Members between now and Christmas.

Why?

The 121st Annual General Meeting of the QIA will be held at Coorparoo RSL Club, 45 Holdsworth Road, Coorparoo, on Saturday, 9th November 2024, commencing at 11am.

Parking is readily available, as is public transport (Bus 200 from the Cultural Centre, with others).

Attendance of Members is particularly important as the Constitution presently requires 40 Members for a quorum, and attendance at last year's AGM was just sufficient.

Attached to this Newsletter are

- Notice of Annual General Meeting
- Agenda for the Annual General Meeting
- Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting
- Proxy form for the Annual General Meeting.

IMPORTANT REQUEST

I urge each National Member who will not be attending the AGM to print, fill out and post the Proxy Form to the Queensland Irish Association Friendly Society Limited, ABN 49 067 648 367, PO Box 12745, Brisbane George Street, QLD 4003.

I suggest that the Proxy Form could nominate, as the alternative proxy, "the chairman of the Annual General Meeting".



QIA Dancers in action at Brisbane Celtic Festival. Picture: By Peter Cawley of the Tara Hall Dining Group.

BRISBANE CELTIC FESTIVAL

The first Brisbane Celtic Festival was held at the Celtic Nations Standing Stones Monument at Moorlands Park, Auchenflower on Sunday, 13th October 2024.

More than two and a half thousand people attended the festival, which hosted a jam-packed full day of entertainment, including dancers, the Queensland Irish Choir, solo entertainers like Dominic Ward and Tom Kimmet, and five Pipe and Drum bands.

You will find featured in this Newsletter, some photos which capture the gait of the occasion.

Our thanks go to Mavis Williams, the President of the Celtic Council of Australia (Queensland) Inc, and to Ian Campbell, for their outstanding work in staging the festival.

Our thanks also to Brisbane City Council, and the Lord Mayor, Adrian Schinner (who opened the festival) for their generous support.

IRISH REMEMBRANCE MASS

Members are reminded that this year's Irish Community November Remembrance Mass on the Gold Coast will take place on Sunday, 3rd November at 11.30am.

It will be held at the new location of Saint Joseph the Worker Catholic Church, 44 Imperial Parade, Labrador QLD 4215.

All are welcome to join this opportunity to remember and pray for our deceased family members and friends.

IRISH FILM FESTIVAL

Members are also reminded of the Irish Film Festival at Dendy Cinemas, Coorparoo from 15th to 17th November 2024. More details are in this Newsletter.

CHOIR CONCERT

Members are also reminded of the Christmas Concert by the Queensland Irish Choir, which will be held on 16th November 2024.

The choir will be performing

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Celtic Nations Pipes and Drums at Brisbane Celtic Festival. Picture: Peter Cawley



Revellers enjoying the Brisbane Celtic Festival. Picture: Peter Cawley

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their 10th Anniversary Concert, The Light of Christmas, at The Hills Church Auditorium, (Everton Hills Wesleyan Methodist Church), 79 Queens Road, Everton Hills 4053. Details [here](#).

LUNCH & DRINKS

Thank you to Members who attended the lunch at Coorparoo RSL on Wednesday, 16th October 2024, and the Members Drinks at the Normanby Hotel on Friday, 18th October 2024.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Keep this date: 8th December 2024 for the QIA Christmas Party, at Wests Rugby Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong, commencing at 12 noon. Full details in our next Newsletter.

*Jeff Spender, President,
Queensland Irish Association.*

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

You can also reach us through our website, 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.

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Calendar

Sunday, 3rd November, 11.30am.
2024 Irish Community November Gold Coast Remembrance Mass at St Joseph The Worker Church, Labrador.

Saturday, 9th November, 11am to 2.30pm.
QIA AGM and Members Lunch, Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth St, Coorparoo.

Friday, 15th November to Sunday, 17th November.
Irish Film Festival Australia, Dendy Cinema, Coorparoo.

Saturday, 16th November, 1.30pm.
Queensland Irish Choir's The Light of Christmas, The Hills Church Auditorium, 79 Queens Road, Everton Hills.

Sunday, 8th December, from 12pm.
QIA Christmas Party, Wests Rugby Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong.

Early January 2025.
Nollaig na mBan/Women's Little Christmas. Finn McCool's Fortitude Valley. Event date TBA.

Saturday, 1st February 2025.
St Brigid's Dinner at Royal on the Park, Brisbane.

Early February 2025.
St Brigid's Film Screening. Date and details TBA.

Saturday, March 8th, 2025
Queensland Irish Choir St Patrick's Day Concert, Hills Church, Everton Hills, Qld.

Sunday, 16th March 2025.
QIA St Patrick's Eve Dinner 2025, Brisbane City Hall, St George's Square, Brisbane. Further details TBA.

Come home to Ireland to discover your Irish ancestry

You know for sure, or maybe you have an inkling there's Irish blood in your family. Well, there's no time like the present to start looking into it.

There's a community of searchers and sleuths among the 70 million people around the world claiming Irish ancestry, but with the help of online databases and genealogy resources it's never been easier to join in and start your own investigation.

A good starting point is the Irish Government website www.irishgenealogy.ie, which has records of births, baptisms, marriages and burials from a number of counties. The National Archives website contains early 20th-century census returns while www.rootsireland.ie has over 20 million records from the various county genealogy centres on the island of Ireland. Simply key in your name and the journey begins.

Armed with your online discoveries, a trip to Ireland is a great next step in unearthing your family history.

Head for the National Library, National Archives and General Register Office in Dublin or, if your history points to Northern Ireland, visit the Public Records Office in Belfast.

If you already know which county your ancestors hail from you can find out more from the professional genealo-



Pictures: Ireland.com

gists in the many county genealogy centres. Tracing your ancestry is an exciting adventure but it can be time-consuming and complicated. Happily, there is also the option to commission the Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland to help.

They'll find not only your ancestors but also living relatives, and getting to meet long lost cousins in the land of your forefathers is a thrill worth waiting

for.

The immense Irish diaspora is the result of hundreds of years of emigration. For those seeking to know more about how and why their family emigrated a visit to Epic Ireland in Dublin is a must.

This hi-tech, interactive experience tells the authentic stories of 10 million epic journeys and how Irish emigrants helped shape the world.

Epic Ireland also contains an Irish Family History Centre operated by genealogical specialists, Eneclann.

They offer consultations with experts, access to Irish family history records and information to help with genealogical research.

There is even the opportunity to purchase a Family Tree DNA Kit to see if Irishness is in your genes.

So why not get on the trail? Next time you visit Ireland you could be coming home.

www.ireland.com

www.accreditedgenealogists.ie

www.eneclann.ie

www.nidirect.gov.uk/proni

www.facebook.com/IrelandFamilyHistory



Cyril Kennedy closes chapter as he retires as QIA librarian

On his retirement from the position, Queensland Irish Association Honorary Librarian Cyril Kennedy reflects on his years working on the collection.

End of an era.

“The age of the world, to this year of the Deluge, 2242. Forty days before the Deluge, Cea-sair came to Ireland with fifty girls and three men, Bith, Ladhra, and Fintain, their names.”

These were the first words I read in the first book I picked off the shelf in the Queensland Irish Association library at Tara House, Elizabeth St, Brisbane. The book, “Annals of the Four Masters”, was translated into English by John O’Donovan in the late 19th century. Who could not be intrigued and want to learn more about what those few words meant.

The QIA library was founded in 1904, just six years after the club itself came into being. The same year the Abbey Theatre in Dublin was founded and the year that James Joyce’s great novel Ulysses is based. So, our library is in great Irish cultural company.

The library holds over 5,500 books covering all subjects from biography to history with fiction and nonfiction.



Cyril Kennedy in the Irish Club Library in 2013. Picture: Mary Allen

Most books are in English but there is also a large collection written in Irish. The books are listed under the Dewey catalogue system.

One of our prize possessions is a facsimile copy of “The Book of Kells” in full colour. So, there is no need to travel all the way to Dublin, queue for hours at Trinity College in order to get a very quick glimpse at one page before being shuffled on.

Books have been donated by QIA members and non-members over the past 120 years and continues to this day. Each book has a label inside the front cover acknowledging the donor and date of donation. There is also a donation of over 500 CDs of Irish music.

Over the decades students and scholars have used the library to further their studies and write their theses. Most recently local historians Robin and Rodney Sullivan made extensive use of our stored collection to write their wonderful book “A Hundred Thousand Welcomes. The History of the Queensland Irish Association” published in 2023.

Many volunteers have looked after the library over the decades including honorary librarians Patrick Coughlin, Leo Moloney, Kevin Kearney and Denise McCarthy.

Unfortunately, with the closure of the QIA in 2015 the library collection was packed up and put into secure storage at Willawong where it awaits the day of resurrection.



Rita Stott and Cyril Kennedy looking through the library. Picture: Mary Allen

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Cyril Kennedy closes chapter as he retires as QIA librarian

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I am Cyril Kennedy, the current honorary librarian for the QIA.

I was born in 1944 in the small town of Thurles in Co. Tipperary. Being the third son of Luke Kennedy I was named after him. Being christened 3 days after my birth I was given my middle name of Cyril after the saint whose feast day it was. The Christian Brothers spent nine years trying to educate me. When my father retired (from An Garda Siochana) in 1959 the family left Ireland and resettled in London.

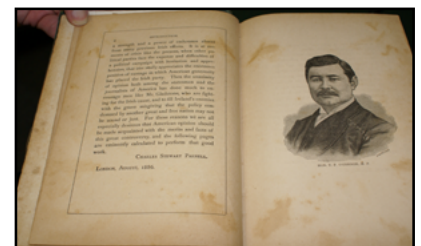
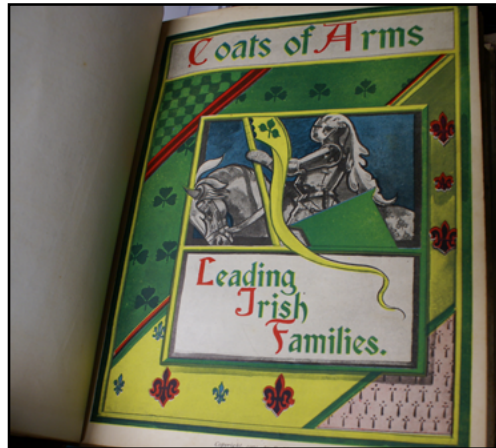
As a 15 year old this was a huge cultural shift but what a great place to be a young man in the swinging 1960's. I went straight to work and also studied at night school where I was introduced to the modern authors Aldous Huxley, Ernest Hemingway, George Orwell, Brendan Behan, etc.

At age 22 I married a London girl and sailed for Australia. We landed in Fremantle on Christmas Day 1966 and then sailed on to Melbourne. We worked there for 6 months but when winter came, we were not prepared for it. There was nothing in the glossy brochures about that. So, we moved to Brisbane for the better climate. Our two children were born here.

In 1972 the next big move came when we went to live and work on Bougainville Island in TPNG. After 8 years of an island lifestyle, we moved back to Brisbane where we built our ideal home whilst continuing to work for the same mining company. In 1982 we became Australian citizens, and I joined the QIA.

In 1990 the mining operation ceased, and after a 20-year association I was a free agent. "Have passport, will travel" was the motto and the next phase of my work life began. As a contractor I worked short term on many mine sites in Australia and abroad.

During this period our children



Books in the Queensland Irish Association's library. Pictures: Mary Allen

finished school, found jobs and love, married and moved out to raise their own families. By 2000 I was a widower with a large house and an uncertain future ahead of me. As work began to lose its interest for me, I decided to retire after 46 years in the workforce.

I sold the house and bought a 4wd and caravan and set off as a grey nomad. The Australian Electoral Commission officially classified me as an "itinerant". The following years were spent travelling the highways and byways of every state and territory of Australia. Rambling like that really opened my mind to the diversity of this big country and its people.

Then in 2012 another seven-year itch happened, and I decided to settle down once more in Brisbane in order to be close to family and friends. I had time on my hands and needed a new interest. That came in the position of honorary librarian at the QIA.

Now that I have reached my four score years it is time to relinquish that position and pass the librarian's stamp on to the next generation, to a younger person with the energy and enthusiasm to bring the QIA library back into the sunlight for all to use and enjoy. The Abbey Theatre in Dublin and James Joyce's "Bloomsday" are important to Irish culture, and no one would let them decay and die. So, it is the same for our QIA library, which is of equal age to those icons of Irish culture.

It's been wonderful to have met many grand people over those years.

• Queensland Irish Association needs a new librarian. The library is a very important part of the club. If you are interested in taking on this vital voluntary role, contact the QIA at: Phone (07) 3067 3064, email enquiries@queenslandirish.com, address PO Box 12745, George Street, Qld 4003.

QIA ladies to celebrate Women's Little Christmas



A Women's Little Christmas celebration at the Irish Club of WA. Picture: [Facebook/Irishclubofwa](https://www.facebook.com/Irishclubofwa)

Nollaig na mBan, or Women's Little Christmas, is a time-honoured Irish tradition that puts the spotlight on the hardworking women who keep families running through the festive season.

Celebrated on January 6th, the day is a well-deserved break for women, as the men of the household take over all the chores while the ladies kick back, relax, and enjoy some well-earned indulgence. It's a day filled with laughter, storytelling, and a little bit of mischief, as the women of Ireland gather to toast to another year of family, friendship, and perseverance.

Originating in rural Ireland, Nollaig na mBan was a vital part of Irish life when households were often large, and Christmas was an overwhelming flurry of preparations. On this day, the women, after weeks of shopping, cooking, and hosting, would hang up their aprons and celebrate Christmas on their own terms. Traditionally,

they would gather in homes or local pubs, enjoy tea, cake, or something a bit stronger, and take the opportunity to let their hair down in each other's company.

The tradition is thought to have originated as a way to acknowledge the biblical feast of Cana, where Jesus turned water into wine. Traditionally, men would take on the women's household duties, while the women rested. Goose was the traditional meat served on this day. Children often buy their mothers and grandmothers gifts on this day.

The tradition is more widespread in some areas of Ireland, such as Cork and Kerry. It had been dying out in some parts of Ireland, but it is returning to popularity. Hotels and restaurants now offer ladies' afternoon teas to celebrate.

Today, the day continues, not just in Ireland but around the world, where Irish communities have kept

the tradition alive. It has also evolved into a day for acknowledging women's achievements, celebrating female solidarity, and raising awareness for women's causes.

Whether it's through small gatherings, charity events, or raising a glass to toast the women who make the world go round, Nollaig na mBan is a festive reminder to take a moment to honour the women who've worked behind the scenes, keeping the spirit of Christmas alive. So, this January 6th, take a cue from the women of Ireland, and celebrate their resilience, strength, and timeless tradition of Nollaig na mBan.

• Queensland Irish Association's Nollaig na mBan celebration will be held at Finn McCool's Fortitude Valley in early January. Date to be announced. Further details in our next Newsletter.

Celebrate 10 years of Irish Film Festival magic

The Irish Film Festival Australia's full cinema and online program for the 10th Anniversary 2024 Festival has been announced!

This year, the festival will showcase a total of 16 films and documentaries from Ireland. This includes one World Premiere and 12 Australian Premieres. The festival will screen in cinemas in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane, and Canberra from 17 October – 24 November and online across Australia from 17 October – 3 November.

Audiences will also have exclusive behind-the-scenes access to films via our Q&A sessions between Festival Director, Dr Enda Murray and a selection of our films' Directors and cast.

SEE ALL MOVIES + BOOK TICKETS HERE:

irishfilmfestival.com.au

Among the highlights this year are the opening night film and Australian Premiere of Pat Collins' *That They May Face the Rising Sun*, based on the internationally acclaimed, award-winning novel by Irish author John McGahern, which captures the essence of nature, humanity, and the rhythms of life in a rural Irish community in the 1980s.

This year's program features an eclectic mix of dramas, thought-provoking documentaries, horrors, and a family-friendly animation. Several directorial debuts are included in the program, such as Claire Dix who directs *Sunlight* and Patricia Kelly who directs *Verdigris*.

Festival opening nights in each city includes a ticketed reception event with drinks, live music and a guaranteed warm Irish welcome.

Queensland Irish Association is a sponsor of the 2025 Irish Film Festi-



The crew behind the '24 festival. Picture: facebook.com/irishfilmfestau

val Australia.

Dendy Cinemas Coorparoo will be hosting the festival in Brisbane from Friday, November 15th to Sunday, November 17th. Here are the films that will be showing:

Friday, November 15th

- 7pm: *That They May Face The Rising Sun*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.

Saturday, November 16th

- 12pm: *A Greyhound of a Girl*
- 1.45pm: *Stolen*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.
- 4.10pm: *Verdigris*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.
- 6.25pm: *All You Need is Death*

- 8.20pm: *Dance First*.

Sunday, November 17th

- 12pm: *Tarrac*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.
- 2.15pm: *Ó Bhéal*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.
- 4pm: *Sunlight*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.
- 6.15pm: *Lie of the Land*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.
- 8.15pm: *Brendan Gleeson's Farewell to Hughes's*. Includes recorded Q&A with director and actors.

Dendy Cinemas are at the corner of Old Cleveland and Cavendish Rd, Coorparoo, QLD 4151.

Queensland Irish Association

Christmas Party 2024



Join us on Sunday, 8th December
from 12 noon at

West's Rugby Club, Sylvan Rd, Toowong

Food and beverages available to purchase
Guinness on tap



RSVP to Mavis Williams on (07) 3849 8271



Queensland Irish Association

Annual General Meeting



Queensland Irish Association Members:
Join us on Saturday, 9th November, 2024
from 11am at

Coorparoo RSL, Coorparoo, QLD
for our AGM, followed by lunch

Food and drinks available to purchase
Seniors Specials available

Your attendance is really needed to ensure we
have a quorum for this important AGM.

Coorparoo RSL, 45 Holdsworth Street, Coorparoo, Queensland.

Having a Function

We can add a whole lot more to your evening

Photo's (6inX8in) printed the same night and returned
before the function finishes.

We will do PR photos of the event at no extra cost.

(subject to numbers)
Studio lights if requested will be set up before
guests arrive.

There is no additional cost beyond the price of the
photo's.

This is a great way to have a memory of the evening.

Good Times Network Photography

Phone 0401450977

www.goodtimesbrisbane.com



Queensland Irish Choir 10th Anniversary Concert "The Light of Christmas"



Musical Director: David O'Keeffe

Accompanist: Tim Li

The Irish Choir will perform some beautiful Irish & Celtic songs in this Special Christmas Concert. It will feature small ensembles of a number of our talented choristers performing vocal/instrumental items.

THE HILLS CHURCH AUDITORIUM
(Everton Hills Wesleyan Methodist Church)
79 Queens Road, Everton Hills. 4053

SATURDAY: 16th November 2024

Doors Open: 1:30pm for 2pm start

Adult: \$25.00 U15's \$10.00

Bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/CVRYL>

On-line Purchase Discount:-

6 Tickets for the price of Five!



Tickets on Sale at Door (Until Sold Out)

All Enquiries: 0493 455 487

