

GENEALOGY CONFERENCE HELD IN ENNIS

Clare Roots Society hosted a major Genealogy and Family History Conference at the Templegate Hotel Ennis on Saturday 1 October 2011

ENNIS, CO CLARE, 1 Oct 2011 - The Templegate Hotel in Ennis was the place to be last Saturday if you were interested in Genealogy and Family History. A major international conference was hosted by Clare Roots Society with the theme, "The Future of our Past" and was addressed by leading figures from the world of Genealogy and Family History. Over 150 people attended the one-day Conference, the first of its kind to be held in Clare. Some of the participants travelled from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, England and Switzerland. The Conference was officially opened by the Mayor of Clare, Pat Hayes.

The keynote address was given by Dr Nick Barratt, London, whose talk was entitled 'Family History and the Media' in which he examined the way genealogy has been transformed over the past 5 years by TV and the Internet. Dr. Barratt took his audience behind the scenes of programmes like Who Do You Think You Are to reveal how they are made and the impact the shows have had on the way people research. Nick Barratt is a TV presenter and commentator. He is Editor in Chief of Your Family History magazine and Chief Executive of Sticks Research Agency. He was the original genealogical consultant and lead researcher for BBC's show Who Do You Think You Are. It was the first time that Dr. Barratt and his partner had been to Ennis and they were delighted with the location of the Conference and the amenities of the town.

John Grenham M.A. author of *Tracing your Irish Ancestors* and the writer of the weekly 'Irish Roots' column in *The Irish Times* gave a talk entitled 'Jam Tomorrow: What's online and what's coming. He was full of praise for the courage of Clare Roots Society in organising such a successful event in the current climate. John also spoke glowingly of the fine services of Clare Library which he said is the envy of many other libraries in Ireland and abroad in terms of the amount of genealogical and other information that is freely available online from the Library.

Gregory O'Connor from the National Archives of Ireland spoke on the use of legal and Court documents in genealogical research, Jim Herlihy, author of *The Royal Irish Constabulary: A Complete Alphabetical List of Officers and Men, 1816-1922* gave a fascinating talk on 'The Black & Tans & the Auxiliaries'. Dr Jane Lyons, Professional Genealogist and moderator of a number of genealogy websites spoke on the importance of graveyards in genealogical research. Liam Curran a Clare based amateur historian gave a very vivid talk on 'The Irish Soldier in the British Army in the First World War'. Antoinette O'Brien, Genealogist and Manager of Clare Heritage Centre in Corofin outlined the work of the Genealogy Research Centre and its records.

In the week leading up to the Conference, daily events such as visits to Drumcliff Cemetery, to the Local Studies Centre, genealogical workshops, free consultations with genealogists and talks were arranged for the visitors who attended the Conference.

At a dinner following the Conference, the Chairman of Clare Roots Society, Gerry Kennedy, thanked all the speakers who had travelled from abroad and from within Ireland. The success of the Conference will lead to other events of its kind and continue to attract the Diaspora back to their roots in Clare.

