

# USA/Canada Clan Egan

Issue 2

2004

## Clan Egan 2004 Rally Ireland

**Byron F. Egan**  
President  
USA/Canada Clan Egan Association  
Dallas, Texas

Fellow Egan/Eagen/Egan/Keegan Clan Members

The Clan Egan Rally 2004 in Ireland was a great success! Over 100 people took part in various segments of the Rally, which started in Dublin on June 24 and concluded on June 27 at Redwood Castle in County Tipperary near the Shannon River, which was first occupied by Egans in 1350. In addition to exploring our Irish heritage through visits to interesting Egan-related sites and the sharing of genealogical information, there was considerable socializing among old and new friends and relations with Egan roots. This was our 12<sup>th</sup> Rally since 1982.

We began our Rally with gathering in Jurys Inn Christchurch and then explored various churches, the

*Continued on next page*

## Egan Coat of Arms

*Fortitude and Prudence*



## Clan Egan 2006 Rally Dallas

**Nancy Egan**  
Dallas, Texas

Join your family members - Egans, Eagans, Eagens, Agins and Keegans - all descendants of Aodhagain, hereditary brehons (judges) in Ireland - for our Clan Egan Rally to be held in Dallas, Texas USA in June 2006. In addition to learning more about your Irish heritage, and finding new branches and twigs of your family tree, you will find out about the Irish and Egans in Texas as well as experiencing the attractions in Dallas.

Dallas attractions include:

**Dallas Public Library's** extensive genealogy library with knowledgeable people to help you, extend or complete your search for your Egan roots.

**The Sixth Floor Museum**, commemorating President John F. Kennedy's assassination. The Museum contains nearly 400 historic photographs, six documentary films, an audio tour and a range of artifacts and interpretive displays to document the life, times, death and legacy of President John F. Kennedy. The 9,000 square-foot museum recreates the social and political context of the early 1960s, chronicles the events of November 22, 1963, and analyzes Kennedy's lasting impact on American culture.

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## Opening letter from the President

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Guinness Brewery, Trinity College with the Book of Kells and other Dublin sites. On Friday, June 25, we went to the Boyne River valley region to explore Newgrange, a massive stone necropolis that dates to 3,200 BC (older by several centuries than Stonehenge in England and the pyramids in Egypt) and shows that the ancient Irish had the social structure to organize millions of man hours to move massive stones many miles and the engineering skills to build a lasting structure oriented such that at the winter solstice the sun's rays penetrate along a stone passage to the central chamber. From Newgrange we proceeded to Athlone, which has been a strategic crossing point on the River Shannon for many centuries. We sailed on a Viking boat down the Shannon River to Clonmacnoise, a monastic settlement that dates from 545 AD, and then traveled to the Blackwater Peat Bog near Shannonbridge, from which peat is being cut to fuel electric power generation.

At our banquet in Athlone our Chief presented an Egan chalice dated 1642 and inscribed to Una Egan Burke, who came to Lorrha while the Egans were at Redwood. At a special service in the Catholic Church in Lorrha conducted by our own Father Joe Egan from Los Angeles, we were offered communion out of the chalice just as earlier Egans were. We are indebted to Mark Miller for driving to Loughrea to borrow the chalice for the Rally.

At Redwood Castle we were hosted by Coleesa Egan Curtin, daughter of our late Chief Michael J. Egan, and feasted on roasted pig, salmon and other delicacies. After lunch, wise men educated us about the history of the MacEgans and an Irish DNA family project, which may help us identify family members in lieu of written records.

For the success of our 2004 Rally, which is described more fully elsewhere in this newsletter, we owe a giant vote of thanks to our Clan Chief, Michael J.S. Egan of Dublin, who organized and led the Rally, and to Eithne Egan and her family, who made Redwood Castle available to us. Eithne's late husband, Michael J. Egan, was responsible for re-establishing the Clan Chief title in modern times and was responsible for restoring Redwood Castle. We also appreciate the help of Mr. &

Mrs. Mike Egan from Australia for serving as Treasurer for the Rally and handling the sales of Clan Egan T-shirts and hats.

We also owe much to Doug Egan, who spread the word of the Rally through the Clan's Newsletter; Jacki Barber, Chair of our Technology Committee, who, through the Clan Egan web site and numerous e-mails, spread the word of our Rally; and to the others who helped in these efforts. The current members of our Newsletter Committee and our Technology Committee are listed elsewhere in this newsletter. Anyone else interested in joining one of these Committees is welcome to do so by contacting the appropriate Committee Chair at an address specified below.

The Clan Egan web site address is <http://www.clanegan.org>. This Mac Aodhagain site will continue to be a starting point for all things Egan, with greater emphasis placed on finding and uniting Clan branches USA/Canada, Australia and International. Jacki Barber and our Technology Committee have developed this web site using the Clan's domain name, which we should visit often. While the Clan's origins are ancient, our technology and communications belong to the new Millennium.

The Technology Committee, chaired by Jacki Barber, includes Patrick J. Eagan, Doug Egan, Greg Egan, James H. ("Jim") Eagen, Kathleen A. Egan, Kieran Egan, Judith S. Tafuto and Mary Theresa Taylor.

In publishing the Newsletter, Doug Egan is our Editor. Katherine Egan Bennett, Jane Eagen, Robert Egan and Carole Mondragan are working with Doug. We owe much to Doug for undertaking the responsibility of this newsletter as well as contributing to the Technology Committee.

Our next Rally will be in or around Dallas, Texas in June of 2006. The Dallas Egans are enthusiastic about the Rally and are planning a true Texas welcome!



## **Clan Egan 2006 Rally Dallas**

**Mesquite Championship Rodeo**, with exciting professional cowboy competition, live Texas music and Sonny Bryan's famous chuck wagon BBQ, the Mesquite Championship Rodeo is the perfect place to go for authentic Texas fun! Bull riding, bronco riding, tie down roping and more in the modern, air-conditioned Resistol Arena.

**Southfork Ranch**, internationally known as the filming location for the "Dallas" television series, is known worldwide as America's most famous ranch. For thirteen years, television sets were tuned into 356 episodes of Dallas, one of the longest running series in television history.

Nestled in 13 wooded acres just south of downtown Dallas, **Old City Park** is composed of 38 historic structures & boasts a working farm, a traditional Jewish household, elegant Victorian homes, a school, a church & commercial buildings. Old City Park provides insights as to how Irish immigrants to early Texas would have lived. The museum preserves representative structures, artifacts & other historical materials related to the history of Dallas & North Central Texas between the years of 1840-1910 (old by Texas standards and young when compared to Ireland).

**Gilley's of Dallas** - Dallas' newest honky-tonk. Experience real Texas downhome dancin', longneck beer drinkin' and ride the mechanical bull. Gilley's offers live music and country-western dance lessons. Gilley's was the venue of John Travolta and Debra Winger in the movie Urban Cowboy.

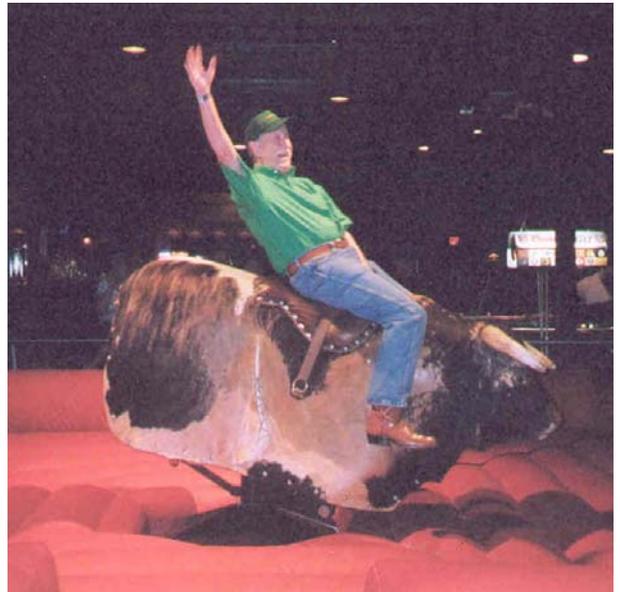
Other Dallas area attractions:

- Six Flags Over Texas
- Tex-Mex food
- World-reknown Dallas Museum of Art and the nearby Nasher Sculpture Garden
- Texas Barbeque (BBQ)
- Lonesome Dove Restaurant and Fort Worth Stockyards (Fort Worth)
- Kimbell Art Museum (Fort Worth)

- Billy Bob's Texas (world's largest honky-tonk) (Fort Worth)
- Texas Rangers Baseball

While the temperatures tend to be much higher in June in Dallas than in Ireland or Australia, we have excellent air conditioning inside.

In the immortal words of Davey Crockett who died at the Alamo in 1836 to make Texans free, "You may all go to Hell, and I will go to Texas."



**Byron Egan on a mechanical bull at Gilley's (a large honky-tonk that is being considered for one of our events)**

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## Redwood Castle

**Michael J.S. Egan**

**President, Clan Egan Organization**

Dublin, Ireland

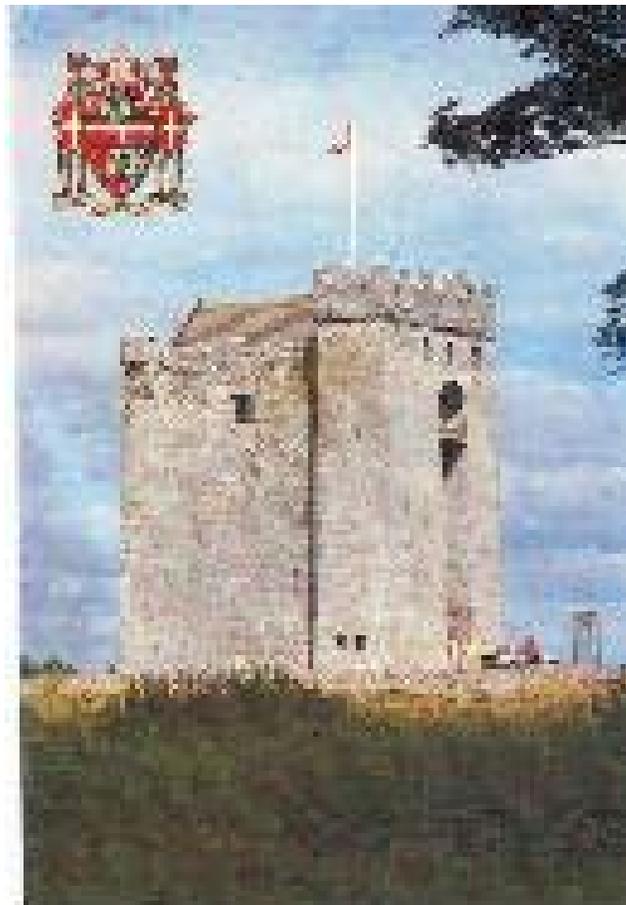
A centerpiece of Rallies in Ireland is the visit to Redwood Castle which was first occupied by Egans in 1350. Restored in 1981 by our late Chief Michael J. Egan with the able assistance of architect Patrick Egan (a close relative of Michael J.), Redwood Castle is the oldest occupied Castle in Ireland where the present owners are kinsfolk of the owners of more than 600 years ago.

Redwood Castle was built by Normans about 1210, and occupied by them until 1350. In 1350 the O'Kennedys, the Chieftains of this Territory, took over the castle and installed the MacEgans, who were the leading Irish family of hereditary brehons and ollaves - lawyers and professors.

After the Normans landed in Ireland they picked good land in various centres and built timber strongholds on high earth mounds known as mottes. They erected timber stockades to bring in their livestock for protection. In 1207 Norman Settlements in Lorrha, Birr and Kinnity were attacked and burned by the O'Briens of Munster, but the Normans decided to stay at Redwood - then called *Coillte Ruadh* - and erected this substantial stone building. Because the Normans were conscious of their vulnerability to attack, the walls were built almost nine feet thick and at ground level there was not a single opening other than the single door at the front. There were no windows or even slits to admit light or air. When the lights are off there is total darkness on the ground floor, so it would be suitable only for storage or livestock.

A celebrated school of learning (primarily of law and history) was established at Redwood by the MacEgans. Pupils came to Redwood from all parts of Ireland for about 300 years. The first Redwood school was replaced by another school in Ballymacegan, which is very close to Redwood Castle. The second Redwood school to be replaced by another in Ballymacegan.

Redwood's location convenient to the river Shannon made it easy of access, because at the time there was considerable traffic by water, and no roads as we know them. Well known persons who were educated here include Michael O'Clery from Donegal, the chief of a



team of historians who compiled the Annals of the History of Ireland known as the Annals of the Four Masters. When the compilation of the Annals was completed in 1636 the owner of the Castle - Flann MacAodhagain - was the first of the six leading scholars invited to write his approval of the work.

It was from the O'Kennedys that the MacEgans acquired the old Norman Castle in 1350, and by a remarkable coincidence it was from Michael Kennedy of Redwood, on whose holding the old ruin was located, that Michael J. Egan, a Mayo lawyer in the family tradition, purchased the ruined building in 1972 and restored it to serve as a private residence. The imposition of an Irish residence tax with an exemption for buildings of great historic interest led to the opening of Redwood Castle to the public. ❖

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## Egan Genealogical Progress

**Michael J.S. Egan**  
President  
Clan Egan Organization  
Dublin, Ireland

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*Note from the editor: On the final day of the Rally 2004, after the Clan members shared a wonderful lunch in the Redwood Castle, Micael J.S. Egan introduced Nollaig O'Muraile in the following manner.*

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“As you sit here in Redwood Castle on this pleasant summer’s day I would ask you all to look closely at your surroundings – then close your eyes and try to imagine a scene in this exact place in 1636. Flann McEgan and his household would have been entertaining Micheál O’Cléirigh (Michael O’Cleary) following the completion of his great work now known as “The Annals of Four Masters”. It would have been an occasion of great joy as Flann would have appreciated the amount of blood and sweat that would have gone into the compilation of such a massive amount of data from every corner of Ireland – all compiled under the most dangerous of conditions. All would have been aware that the data that was not collected at this time would most likely have been lost forever.

Move then to the present and imagine a modern day learned man capable of reading our ancient Irish texts with the dedication as of old who sits down to accomplish a similar task almost single handedly. This man, who sits before you, I am proud to present is Nollaig O’Muraile. He has spent 33 years preparing the genealogies, as compiled by Dubhaltach Mac Firbis, of the ancient families of Ireland for publication and these have been published on 16 April 2004. Five volumes, 1.3 million words, 70,000 index cards, 40,000 peoples names, 600 tribes, 30,500 individuals, 3,200 places from 790 original pages to 830 pages of print, 1,312 pages of typescript (AFM 1,050 pages) later the work is done. --- An absolutely Herculean feat.

Rather than go on any longer I would ask Nollaig to say a few words to us on the genealogies of the Mac Egans as recorded in this great work.” ❖

## Clan Egan DNA Project

**Doug Egan**  
Boca Raton, FL

After Nollaig O’Muraile spoke about his monumental effort to compile five volumes of genealogical data of the ancient families of Ireland, Brian McEvoy spoke on his DNA research of surnames.

As many of you will know, DNA testing allows the male and female lines to be traced back over long periods. At the instigation of the Clan Chief Michael J.S. Egan, Clan members are undertaking the Clan Egan DNA Project, led by Clan Egan (Australia) Greg & Sue Egan, as part of an attempt to bridge some of the major gaps in the documented genealogies. Other goals of the Clan are:

- Make Members and non-Members aware of heritage and preserve history of our illustrious name
- Help preservation of genealogical records and access to available records (computer data base progress)
- DNA linkage
- Help other Clans with their genealogical efforts

Brian McEvoy is currently preparing his thesis on his research study exploring the migration of important Irish families. Tests under this study are free and will in time provide us with much better information as to where the various Egan/Keegan and other families come from. It is expected the study will publish results eventually. The following [paper](#) by the Trinity College Group, provides a splendid technical explanation.

<http://members.optushome.com.au/gke/Clan/Research/Documents/Hill.pdf>

The DNA results are interesting in that they show that people with similar surnames are not necessarily related, at least in greater Europe where names were often associated with trades e.g. Smith for blacksmith, Baker for baker etc. In Ireland however the gaelic names were tied to families.

**This makes the prospect for our surname project very good indeed as Egan is a recognised ancient name of Ireland.**

For more information: (Clan Egan Australia website)  
<http://members.optushome.com.au/gke/Clan/Research/DNATesting.html>

DNA Testing Results to date:

<http://members.optushome.com.au/gke/Clan/Research/DNAResults.html> ❖



## Finding the Family Farm

### Jackie Egan

Northumberland, PA

After this year's Clan Rally, our plans included a visit to the area of the old Egan family homestead.

Located in County Leitrim, which is still one of the more remote areas of Ireland, are some back roads that once held the family farm. While in Ireland during Rally 2000, the Leitrim Genealogy Center had made photocopies for us of a small section of the old 1912 Ordnance map that showed where the Egans were once located. Since the first member of Tim's family to arrive in the USA came in 1908, we knew that this 1912 map was indeed produced exactly at the time they were still living on the land.

However, in order to ensure that we found our way around the entire area, we purchased a current Ordnance map. This proved to be invaluable, as it would have been impossible to figure out which roads to take, otherwise.

It was a dreary rainy day when we set out, but it didn't matter, as we were in our vehicle and on a mission. We drove along the old road out through Eslin Bridge, past the Laheen House and on to Corlaskagh. According to the two maps, the road has not changed much in all these years. Oh, it is paved, but it is still one-lane road, without any sign posts and the areas where you cross over the two creeks, have

stonewalls that allow enough space for only a small vehicle.

While there are two relatively new homes out along the Corlaskagh Road, it is still pretty remote. There were still a couple old buildings on the road that fit the description of what the family had lived in. They have corrugated tin roofs now, but in 1901 Census, they were described as having thatch. We took some pictures and came back again the next day and took some more. It was a good feeling to be standing on the same road that great granddad and granddad traversed, looking over the stone wall into the creek they passed over to get to the town of Mohill. Mohill is where they conducted business, recorded births, deaths and socialized.

Looking out over the fields, where the Egans tended the land to make their living, we couldn't help but wonder whatever happened to the family members who stayed behind. We know that at least five of Patrick Egan's children came to America in the early part of the 1900s, but whatever happened to Patrick, his wife, Ellen Bohan and their youngest daughter Ellen, will remain a mystery. I am sure, however, that if any of them were looking down during the days we passed by the old farm, they were pleased that a member of the family came back home to see the land. It is a beautiful place, and we enjoyed looking out over the fields and hills that were home to the past generations. ❖

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## The Comfort of the Clan

### Jackie Egan

Northumberland, PA

While I am not an Egan myself, I am married to Tim Egan. This has brought me in contact with Clan Egan for 6 years now and I must say that it has been fun, interesting, knowledgeable, and joyful to be with the Clan. Our trip to Ireland in 2000 introduced me to Redwood Castle, Clonmacnoise, lots of interesting Egans and many areas of Ireland that I had not previously seen. An added bonus on that trip was the discovery, through the efforts of the Leitrim Genealogy Center in Ballinamore, of the Town Land where my husband's ancestors lived.

My second adventure, with Clan Egan in 2002, brought me to Australia. A country I had always wanted to visit. Greg and Sue Egan had a well-planned itinerary for the Rally, and we had an excellent visit, seeing new sights and visiting with the Egans of Australia. Tim and I also spent additional time in country, touring Sydney and Cairns.

The trip to Dublin this year turned out to be a bit different for me. We met up with the Clan at the Jurys Christchurch Inn for the first day's events. All went very well until we left the group after the group tour of the Guinness Storehouse. Tim and I were walking back to our hotel, and decided to stop at The PowerHouse on Parliament Street for a visit. Being a nice establishment, I set my backpack down next to me, without much thought. Unfortunately, it only took letting down my guard for a few moments, and a thief made off with my pack. This was incredibly upsetting to me, and I must say I didn't sleep that night at all, thinking about what I should have done to protect myself better, and how to replace all the missing items that had been stolen.

The following day, upon telling the story to various Clan Egan members, I found a good deal of comfort in the sympathy and understanding I was given. While we did not have all our cash stolen, many people offered us money if we needed it. One member loaned me her digital camera for two days to use in place of my stolen one.

We carried on and had a good time for the rest of the Rally, but I must confess, after we parted ways with everyone and headed north to County Leitrim for a few days on our own, it seemed rather lonely.

I would like to thank you, Clan Egan, for your support, and generous offers of assistance. You certainly helped make our traumatic experience a bit easier to deal with, and we won't soon forget. All the best to everyone, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Dallas at the next Rally. Thanks again. ❖

## Treasurer's Report

### James H. Eagen

Rockville, MD

Dues for the USA/Canada Clan Egan Association are due January 1 for each calendar year at the rate of \$15 per person or \$25 per family household. If you have not paid your dues for 2004, please remit the dues, together with your current mailing and email addresses, telephone and fax numbers, to our Treasurer, Jim Eagen as follows:

**USA/Canada Clan Egan Association  
c/o James H. Eagen  
4610 Brad Court  
Rockville, Maryland 20853**

We have 263 USA/Canada active members and, although we are solvent, it is important that we continue to remit our annual dues to the USA/Canada Clan Egan Association.

Beginning in 2003, Clan Egan has gone to a formal database for membership records using Microsoft Access. The most significant new wrinkle is that the program has established a permanent membership ID for every member. That should help keep us from crediting something to the wrong member. You can imagine the number of similar names in the Clan Egan database.

An additional feature is a more structured accounting of Pence Donations (**which are intended for the benefit of Redwood Castle**) and Dues Payments. Dues paid in 2004 should show in the lower right hand corner of your next mailing label. If any member would like a print-out of the accumulated record since 1998, please send a self addressed envelope to Jim Eagen at the address set forth above with your new member ID, and we will mail it out to you. If there are any discrepancies in the transition from the less structured old system to the new, we will get them corrected. ❖

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## Officers of USA/Canada Clan Egan Association

The current officers of USA/Canada Clan Egan Association, who were reelected at the Rally and agreed to continue, are:

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**Chair of Technology Committee:**

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ΑΟΥΔΑΣΑΙΗ

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**Your Clan Chief and your USA/Canada President each have been elected by members of their respective groups for life. Your other officers were elected to serve until the next Rally and until their respective successors are elected and qualified. In the interim between Rallies, vacancies may be filled and new officers and committee members may be appointed by the Clan Chief or USA/Canada President, as the case may be.**

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<http://www.clanegan.org/>

(Main website)

<http://members.optushome.com.au/gke/Clan/>

(Australian Chapter)

<http://www.ClanEganUSA.org/>

(USA/Canada Chapter - coming soon)

**PLEASE PASS COPIES OF THIS NEWSLETTER TO AS MANY OTHERS AS YOU CAN.**