

# CLANN MAC AODHAĞÁIN



## MacEgan, Egan, Eagan, Eagen and Keegan Families AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

20 June 2006

### Texas Rally 2006

Currently there are 10 confirmed to attend the rally from Australia.

### GSV presentation

Greg gave a very interesting presentation about the Clan and its work to approximately 50 members of the Irish Ancestry Group at the Genealogical Society of Victoria in March. Amongst the audience there were 5 people with direct connections to Egan families, one of them ours, so we felt it was a worthwhile day.

### DNA Study

The most recent results of our DNA Study are on the web. Some of the initial groupings are shown in colour – we now have 2 very distinct groups and we hope to discuss this further with Bennett Greenspan of FamilyTreeDNA at the Rally.

If any other members are considering participating, please let us know. It is also possible for several family members to share the cost of the test for one person from that line/family. The more lines represented the more likely we are to get significant information.

### New Members

We welcome Peter Michael Egan to the Clan and welcome back Margaret Clifton. By coincidence both are descended from the same family of Patrick and Bridget Hallinan from Galway, so there has been a flurry of information sharing over the last few weeks. We also welcome Denis Egan, who is descended from Thomas Egan and Bridget Ahern from Co. Clare.

### Family Reunion

Ballan Greendale, Victoria 2006

The biennial James Egan and Margaret Slamen family reunion in Ballan, Victoria was a very enjoyable day for all who attended, thanks to the hard work of Bernie & Pat D'Arcy. Greg and Sue had a busy afternoon fielding questions about the Clan, the DNA project and in particular the 30m long tree which was rolled out in the grounds of Korobeit Church. New information was added to the tree and two DNA tests were raffled to family members (the results are now up on the website). The tree printout, even though it is a little out-of-date has

been sent to the family of Gerard Egan, on whose initial tree much of the later work was based.

### Member's stories

We received the following from Mary Egan-Reid in New Zealand after she read the previous newsletter:

"Dear Sue,

I was very interested in the recipe for eggnog sent with your latest newsletter because my family have a connection with the author, Pierce Egan. My late father-in-law, John Reid was a Professor of English Literature specialising in the works of Charles Dickens. He died before I met him. His research showed that one of the most important influences on Dickens was Pierce Egan who essentially invented sports journalism. His accounts of the bare-knuckle boxing during the Regency period were the talk of London even by those who didn't follow boxing. All of this research was documented in a book published in the UK in the 1960 called "Bucks and Bruisers" which is as much a history of early boxing as a literary text.

Egan is not a very common surname (how many times do I have to spell it? Can a four letter word really be so difficult to spell?) especially in New Zealand. When I was growing up there were no other Egans living in Auckland and only one other family living in Gisborne. My father believed that family were distant cousins. These days there are a few more of us."

### Research

Kevin Egan continues to supply us with interesting sites from the Web.

Many more cemeteries are putting searching facilities on their websites; this site lists a lot of them in all states [http://dixie9.com/branches/deathcare/index.php?module=article&view=3&MMN\\_position=4:4](http://dixie9.com/branches/deathcare/index.php?module=article&view=3&MMN_position=4:4) under the Indexes Online link. Geelong Cemetery records are available from <http://www.zades.com.au/geelong/gdcmsrc1.asp> Transcriptions of many cemeteries in SW Victoria are available from <http://members.datafast.net.au/~marrtronics/CEMINDEX.HTML>.

Co. Longford ancestry can be viewed at <http://www.longfordancestry.com/index-home.php>.

The Australian Genealogy Interests Directory <http://www.ausgid.com/> is a free site where you can search for and publish the names you are researching – there are related sites for New Zealand, Canada, the UK and USA.

The LibraryIreland site <http://www.libraryireland.com/> has a long list of books and articles on Ireland which have been scanned and are available for download from the site; one interesting one is A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland (1837) by Samuel Lewis which has descriptions of the condition of every parish in Ireland in the 1830's. Let us know if you cannot access it and would like us to send you the description of your family's parish.

Peter Madden has just published a list of Galway immigrants who arrived in Sydney or Queensland

between 1828 and 1860 – he has transcribed all the details from the shipping records – a mammoth task! Check it at

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~maddenps/GALWAYEM.htm>. Peter has another site devoted to Tipperary immigrants

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~maddenps/TIPEM1.htm>

Kevin also sent us this article about the current worldwide interest in DNA testing.

### **Millions of Men May Be Descended From Irish King, Study Says**

*James Owen for National Geographic News  
January 20, 2006*

*Up to three million men living around the world today could be descended from a fifth-century Irish king, according to a new study.*

*Research suggests as many as 1 in 12 men in Ireland carry the genes of Niall of the Nine Hostages, bolstering claims that the ancient warlord founded a dynasty that dominated Ireland for centuries. Some historians doubt Niall's existence, comparing his legend to that of King Arthur. But scientists at Trinity College Dublin in Ireland say a distinctive genetic signature on the male Y chromosome, which is passed down from father to son, leads to Niall or some similar figure. Niall had 12 sons, according to folklore, and took nine key hostages, including Saint Patrick, as way to subdue opponents and consolidate power.*



*Writing this month in the American Journal of Human Genetics, researchers said Niall "resided at the cusp of mythology and history, but our results do seem to confirm the existence of a single early medieval progenitor to the most powerful and enduring Irish dynasty."*

### **Geographic Hotspot**

*The study was based on the DNA samples of 800 males across Ireland. "We used a genetic fingerprint in the Y*

*chromosome that was sufficiently detailed that you wouldn't expect very many men to have the same one," said Dan Bradley, a genetics professor at Trinity College Dublin. In Northwest Ireland, one in five men bore the same distinctive genetic marker, the team found. "That part of Ireland was influenced by a certain dynasty called Uí Néill [descendants of Niall]—a group of lineages that held sway to a greater or lesser degree for almost a thousand years," Bradley said. "The area of this Y chromosome coincides geographically with the greatest influence of these groups," he added.*

*He says the genetic match-up was also significantly higher in men bearing surnames linked to different branches of Uí Néill. "Irish surnames are typically based on people who are the eponymous ancestors," said Bradley, whose own name claims ancestry to Niall. Other examples include Boyle, Egan, Flynn, Gallagher, McGovern, McManus, Molloy, O'Connor, O'Reilly, and Quinn.*

*The approximate age of the Y chromosome was gauged by looking at genetic mutations that accrue over time. "Mutation occurs more or less like a clock," Bradley said. "The chromosome's age was consistent with someone of Niall's vintage, about 1,700 years old." The same chromosome was also found in almost 17 percent of males tested in western and central Scotland and around two percent of New Yorkers of European origin. The team estimates that two to three million males around the world share this same Irish ancestor.*

*The study suggests a link between powerful men and a strong genetic legacy, as more powerful men would have commanded access to more women. "Polygamy was widespread, even in post-Christian Ireland," Bradley said. "Earlier Irish customs were quite resistant to change. Divorce was allowed, and concubines." One 15th-century nobleman with Uí Néill lineage, Turlough O'Donnell, is known to have had 18 sons with 10 different women. His sons gave him 59 grandsons.*

### **We will be Away**

Greg will be on sabbatical leave from Monash University until June 30, 2007 and Sue is going with him of course! Our travels coincidentally include Ireland and, if we are not entirely distracted with learned studies (University of course), newsletters from abroad will arrive spasmodically. While we are away we have declared a further one year moratorium on fees, and your date due has been updated to reflect this, so please don't send any money while we are away!

*Greg & Sue Egan*

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