



Four Altars, Edmondstown, Ireland

*Towey Clan
Chlann Tuathaigh*

2012 Towey Gathering Report-Out

1. The **2012 Towey Gathering** was held in **Rochester, MN** from Friday August 10, 2012 through Sunday August 12, 2012.

That same weekend, the annual Minnesota Irish Fair was held at Harriet Island in Saint Paul, MN. Many Toweys attended part of this momentous Irish festival.

All festivities were held at The Kahler Grand Hotel. The Towey Gathering was a remarkable success. Over 190 families and friends attended from US, Ireland, UK and Canada. The success of the event was due to the dedication of Chairperson, Ed Towey, of Deephaven, MN and Event Planner, Dan Towey, of Blaine, MN, and the dedication of all their family members and friends. To all who participated we extend our greatest appreciations. The program is available at [2012 Bifold Schedule](#).



Thursday Evening, August 9th

Dozens of Towey family members, the early arrivals, held an informal get-together in the outdoor patio of Martini's Lounge. Coincidentally, Rochester's summertime *Thursday Outdoor Market* with live entertainment was being held next to The Kahler Grand Hotel. Several streets were blocked off for live music with over 120 vendors selling food, arts and crafts.



Friday Evening, August 10th

Towey Clan AGM

The Towey Clan AGM was held in The Kahler Grand Hotel, Rochester, MN on August 10, 2012 from about 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Approximately 55 to 60 attended.



Chairperson Ed Towey opened the meeting and gave the Clan's official appreciation to Dan Towey and their local families and friends who arranged all activity for the 2012 Towey Gathering in Rochester, MN. Ed also introduced Mike Towey, Clan Chieftain (Taoiseach), who led discussion of the [AGM Agenda](#).

Executive Committee Election

----- Volunteers are needed to fill the open positions and may email toweymike@yahoo.com to do so. In the meantime, Towey Clan Executive Committee members are:

Chairperson.....Position open

Vice chairperson.....Position open

Secretary.....[Caroline Hassett Power, Quin, Co. Clare, Ire: hassettcaroline@yahoo.ie](mailto:hassettcaroline@yahoo.ie)

Treasurer.....[Patrick Hassett](#), Shannon, Co. Clare, Ire: phassett@ups.com

Historian/Genealogist..Position open

Assistant Genealogist....Dick Towey, Corvallis, OR: toweylr@comcast.net

Webmaster.....Bill Towey, Stockton, CA: wtowey5953@aol.com

Assistant Webmaster....Michael Towey, Dublin: toweymike@hotmail.com

(Afterwards, Bill and Mike agreed to train Leland Fiegel, Cabin John, MD as Assistant Webmaster)

Committee Members....Dan Towey, Blaine, Minnesota: toweydan@juno.com

.....Eileen Collins, Birmingham, UK: eileen.collins34@tiscali.co.uk

.....Michael Towey, Liverpool, UK: ticky1@blueyonder.co.uk

.....Timothy Towey, Newport, RI: tim_towey@stgeorges.edu

Continuing Honorary Officers:

Chieftain (Taoiseach).....Mike Towey, Dublin: toweymike@hotmail.com

Deputy Chieftain (Tánaiste)...Mary Towey Ratto, Ukiah, CA: mmratto@comcast.net

Next Gathering

August 2014: Our next Towey Gathering is in Ballaghaderreen over the weekend of August 23, 24, 25 in 2014. Meeting details will be forthcoming in 2013 on this www.toweyclan.com web site. We have high hopes that hundreds of Toweys and friends around the world will attend.

Haemochromatosis

Mike Towey also made a [Haemochromatosis Awareness](#) presentation, a blood-iron overload that affects 1 in 5 Irish of Celtic decent. Symptoms are chronic fatigue, joint pain. abdominal pain, irregular heart beat. A blood test to check iron status can confirm or rule out iron overload. Click [Haemochromatosis](#) for a downloadable pamphlet.

Informal Family Reception

Upon conclusion of the meeting an informal family group get-together was held where we greeted, renewed friendships and exchanged experiences over a pint or two. *John Towey*, Actor and Professional Pianist, a native of Rochester, MN, entertained the attendees for approximately 2 hours. For more information about John see our [Famous Toweys](#) web page.



Saturday Morning, August 11th

St Bridget's Church and Cemetery Tour

On Saturday morning, dozens of Towey's rode to St Bridget's Church and Cemetery near Simpson, MN. Parishioners built the original church in 1859 from local limestone in honor of St Bridget, an Irish saint who founded the first convent in Ireland at Kildare in 470 A.D. Congregation over the years included dozens of Toweys who lived nearby. Many are buried there. St Bridget's tour was organized by and a short history talk was given by Parishoner Wanda Towey Niehow. Further information may be seen at [Churches and Cemeteries](#)



Saturday Afternoon, August 11th

Genealogy and History

Ed Towey welcomed attendees in conjunction with Virginia Mahoney, Maplewood, MN and Dick Towey, Corvallis, OR who answered audience inquiries for genealogy information and resources. Approximately 45 attended. Bill Towey, Stockton, CA briefed a bit about our Towey "Ole



Sod", Ballaghaderreen, Ireland using maps and picture posters. Several Toweys responded to Ed Towey prompts to provide information about their Irish heritage. Most fascinating, in particular, was listening to Mike McCown, Dickenson, Texas who kept highlighting his genealogy and his continuing search to locate distant Towey ancestors in Texas, to no avail. Handouts on the poster table included a 1901 Ireland census of Toweys, a chronological outline of Ireland History and the Towey Y-DNA Project.

Saturday Evening, August 11th

Social Evening

The Saturday night Irish dinner, floor shows and dancing were highlights of the Gathering and a tremendous success. Approximately 170 adults and 25 children had a fun, cool time.

----- First there were two buffet dinner tables with delicious Irish food items - Irish stew, corned beef and cabbage, potatoes (of course), country bread and dessert. Children were not overlooked, what with chicken strips, french fries and fruit cup for those not attempting Irish food.

----- The Two Mary's, Marriane Connelly and Mary Bridget Towey Lawson, played and sang typical Irish music using a guitar and fife.

----- After an invocation by Deacon Tony Towey, Chicago, Ed Towey warmly welcomed everyone to the festivities and introduced Chieftain Mike Towey, Dublin, Ire who gave thanks to Ed, Dan and the dedication of their families in planning and arranging the entire weekend festivities.



----- Upon Mike's introduction, Eileen Towey Collins, Birmingham, UK warm-heartedly narrated the [Towey Song](#), a poem about Thomas Towey, a tenant evicted by the British from his farmland in Barnaboy, plus two other men who fought the English soldiers and were jailed as Irish hero's.



----- Special recognition was given to family members in attendance who reached the golden 80 years of age.

----- An embroidered quilt was given to the youngest family member in attendance, Brianne Towey Frazier, daughter of Brigit Towey Frazier, Riverview, FL.

----- Next highlight of the festivity was Irish step dancing led by Avin Honecker Sherman, Dodge Center, MN. This dance troupe was sponsored by Catherine Towey, Stewartville, MN.



----- Then the most fun for all was watching or participating with Leprechaun Debby Towey, Hayfield, MN and her little leprechauns in traditional Irish dancing. Debby was assisted by Coleen Fitzgerald. It was a roar to watch her adult leprechauns when they were added to the mele.

----- The evening continued with help of a local professional dance troupe who tried to teach a traditional Irish folk dance called *The Siege of Ennis*.

----- Then festivities continued with music provided by DJ Linda Engele, St Paul, MN.

----- Historical photos of Towey families in the U.S., Ireland and elsewhere were featured in a computer slide show prepared by Katie Scott.

----- Throughout the evening family groups were professionally photographed by Genevieve Detrude and Patricia Towey.

----- Pat Towey displayed a wall chart with Towey family tree connections, about 127 feet long, spanning three walls.

----- T-shirts with the Towey crest thereon were sold at a booth run by Clan members Jim and Peggy Ulwelling, Pine Island, MN.

----- Bill Towey of Stockton, CA also displayed historic maps and photos of the Towey "Ole Sod" in the Ballaghaderreen area.

The Raffle

We thank those who organized and ran the raffle, namely Tammy Towey Adams, San Antonio, TX and her crew Lisa Thompson Gaona and Susie Oswood, Minneapolis, MN and Dennis and Bridget O'Neill, Rochester, MN. A very special thank you to all of you who donated raffle prizes. It is one big way of paying for Gathering expenses outside of the Saturday buffet and Sunday brunch.

Videos

----- Videos of weekend festivities were taken by Patricia Towey, a Film Production graduate of Emerson College, Boston, MA. Cost is \$20.00 per copy.

----- Slide show photos of Towey ancestors plus photos of the 2012 Gathering were taken by Katie Scott and are also available for an additional \$10.00.

----- To obtain a DVD of Patricia's videos and/or a DVD of Katie Scott's photos, kindly send a letter and check to [Towey Gathering](#) and mail to [Dan Towey, 126 96th Lane NE, Blaine, MN 55434](#).

Payment from outside the U.S. must be an international money order in U.S. dollars.. Please include your email address in addition to your mailing address.

Sunday Morning at Assisi Heights, August 12th

On Sunday, a Catholic Mass in remembrance of all deceased Toweys was held in Lourdes Chapel at



Assisi Heights, Rochester, MN, by Father David Byrne, a native of Ireland. The Towey procession into the Chapel was led by Mary Scott, Rochester, MN. Our Chieftain, Mike Towey, prayed for a memorable list of deceased Toweys, to which the congregation responded "Lord, hear our prayer." At the Offertory, several Toweys presented the hosts and wine to Father Byrne. Other Toweys performed as Eucharistic ministers to the congregation for receiving Our Lord in the form of bread and wine.

Following Mass, the Sisters of St Francis served a delicious brunch to about 140 Toweys followed by a tour of the Motherhouse given by Sister Marlys Jax.

Assisi Heights is the Motherhouse for the Sisters of St Francis. Twenty-five Sisters relocated to Rochester, MN in 1877. Nearly one-third of the Sisters are presently located in Rochester area, plus those in Minnesota and fifteen other states as well as Bogotá, Colombia and Cambodia.