

# Southern Celts

AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW PEOPLE WITH A  
CELTIC/GAELIC BACKGROUND LIVE OUT THEIR  
TRADITIONS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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## Abstract

*Southern Celts*, a practise-led narrative inquiry (Arnold, 2007; Gray, 1997; Stewart, 2001), explores how people with Scottish and Irish backgrounds live out their cultural connections to the northern hemisphere homelands, while living in Aotearoa New Zealand. Using narrative as method and text (Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012; Reissman, 2008), the inquiry combines journalistic (Jeppesen & Hansen, 2011), autoethnographic (Bochner & Riggs, 2014; Chang, 2008; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Holman-Jones, Adams & Ellis, 2013), and arts-based methods (Butler-Kisber, 2010; Chilton & Leavy, 2014; Leavy, 2009), with ethnographic and phenomenological insights (Maddison, 2008; Tedlock, 2000; Van Manen, 1990) to represent 25 of 40 interviews in an artefact, a book of interview narratives, intended to engage and inform a wide audience of general readers.

These “lived and told stories” (Pinnegar & Danes, 2007) are situated in a visual metaphor from traditional Celtic art, that of spirals which envisage life moving across time and place. This movement is paralleled in the exegesis by the use of Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) three frames of narrative inquiry: time (past, present and future), place, and the intersection of the personal and the social, to view the narratives which record the lives of individuals, multi-generational families, communities geographic and cultural, past and present, and illustrate the discursive construction of culture/s and identity/ies (Fong & Chang, 2004; Norton, 1995, 2000, 2010; Weedon 1997, 2004).

Much already published work which explores the lives of the Scottish and Irish in New Zealand does so through the major lens of ethnicity, and uses a range of sources that offer insider and outsider perspectives, (Akenson 1990, 2000; Brooking & Coleman, 2003; Brooking & McAloon, 2013; Bueltmann, 2011; Fraser, 2000; McCarthy, 2007, 2011; Paterson,). In contrast, *Southern Celts*’ narratives offer “insider” perspectives which allow readers opportunity to read *with* rather than *about* the narrative (Bochner & Riggs, 2014) and to bring their own experience to the engagement (Benson, 2013; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Reissman, 2008). That process is intended to enable readers to put themselves in the place of the narrators and so to gain insights into the social and political factors which have shaped and continue to shape individuals and communities in Aotearoa New Zealand (Liu, Creanor, MacIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005):

insights which may offer possibilities for living into a more equitable future in Aotearoa.

Informed by postmodern and poststructural theoretical understandings, I, the researcher, writer, and a Southern Celt of Irish background, am situated in the same three dimensional inquiry space as other narrators (Clandinin & Connelly 2000). Thus my own story is visible in the artefact and in the exegesis where it becomes “situated academic narrative” (Arnold, 2011). Using Writing as Method (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005; Richardson, 2000) the inquiry process becomes a site of identity formation. The exegesis explores issues that are integral to narrative, including memory (Mishler, 2006, Ricoeur, 1981), truth (Bochner, 2012; Muncey, 2010) and voice (Chase, 2005, 2011), while discussion of cultural memory (Frawley 2011, 2012) places this inquiry as part of wider diaspora writings. The exegesis attempts as well to assess what the artefact might offer readers using four criteria: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity and impact (Richardson & Pierre 2005; Richardson 2000). It acknowledges that readers, both general and academic, will be final arbiters of this. This document is ordered so that the artefact appears first, then the exegesis. It is suggested they are read in this order.

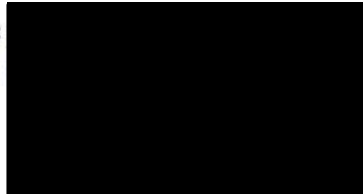
## ***Doctor of Philosophy Declaration***



### **Doctor of Philosophy Declaration**

"I, Celine Kearney declare that the PhD thesis entitled *Southern Celts: An investigation of how people with a Celtic/Gaelic background live out these traditions in Aotearoa New Zealand* is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work".

Signature:



Date: 18 November 2015

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# Southern Celts: The Artefact

## Introduction

“We get our voices from the voices of others.....our stories are created from a multiplicity of witness...”

(Colum McCann, 2006)

“So the story goes from mouth to mouth, from story to myth”

(Arnold Zable, 2009)

Memory is selective. The stories we are told about our past, and about people, are often exactly that, stories that reflect the teller's perceptions, more than comprehensively recounting details of the event, or the individual. That does not diminish the value of the stories which help to create our lives. These stories may change over time as we find out more information or understand a wider context. As decades pass, and we farewell family members, friends and others we have known and loved to rest in death, we live more and more in memory. We are the ones now telling the stories.

Some years ago I recycled over 25 years' worth of diaries. By choice I would have burned them, but city air pollution regulations prohibited this. I felt I would not have the psychological and emotional space I needed to live into the future, if I held on to the past. Now I come to write about family I question the wisdom of not keeping my own first hand written accounts of living nearly a year in Ireland. But I had decided that what I remembered over time would be enough, and in a family who care about family connections and relationships I have photographs, stories, written material, and travellers enough to keep the family connections alive. I have done oral history interviews with both my father and mother, recording their experiences as the children of Irish immigrants, though my mother's sister, Mary, added her own corrections to my mother's interview.

My father's mother, Margaret Kinney, came from County Antrim to Hyde in Central Otago in the 1880s as a small girl with her mother and brother and three sisters. We have a photograph of them taken before they left Ireland. My father's father, Patrick William, a Kearney, was born in Naseby, Central Otago. His father had also come from the north of Ireland, from County Derry. We have been unable to trace these families in Ireland, though different members of the extended family have been to County Derry and County Antrim to search for them. Most recently my sister Brigid and her husband Peter went to the County Derry village where my father's grandfather came from. They visited a local church and graveyards and talked to people with the same surname, but a local priest and other locals said that churches were burned in past attacks on Irish Catholics. With them went the documents that identified links to families in the village.

When the Kearney family moved from Naseby to Ranfurly, in Central Otago, Patrick William, my grandfather, helped build the family farm house out of mud brick on Derry farm, named for the northern Irish province. My father, Patrick John, born in Naseby, one of five children, loved Irish and Scottish music, and he loved to dance. A highlight of his farming life was the Saturday night dance at the Scottish Hall in Oamaru, North Otago where he and his younger brother Dan, and older twin sisters Mary and Nellie, would dance waltzes, scottisches and quadrilles. His records and tapes of popular Irish ballads and Scottish tenors were one of his few relaxations. They were the soundtrack to my childhood and they still call me back to that time and place.

My mother's mother and father, Johannah and Michael, came from County Tipperary, from town lands near the county town of Nenagh. She was a Leamy who came out to New Zealand in 1920, to join my grandfather, a McDonnell, who had come out to members of her family about 1912. My mother Eileen, who was born in Auckland, one of six children, had such a strong Irish accent as a young child that one of her teachers told her mother that she needed to play with the neighbours' children to lose the accent. My mother spoke of Ireland and traced relationships and connections with great clarity, so I was aware from an early age of Ireland's long struggle for independence from political and economic control by the English state. She taught me to play piano accompaniment for the "Skye Boat Song," a story of a Scottish struggle against the English state. I knew that my grandmother, as a woman, could never have inherited

family land in Ireland. Neither my grandparents nor my parents ever went back. Perhaps they had no need to, although one of my mother's brothers did go, following an All Black tour in the 1960s, the only one of that generation of six children to return.

With three Irish born grandparents and one other a child of Irish immigrants, I felt a connection to Ireland. I remember their hospitality and affection, the soft accent of my mother's mother who lived with us for some years, and died with us. As a young woman it was my greatest wish to go to Ireland, spend time there, and meet my mother's family, as we had no contact with my father's people. A cousin and a younger sister had gone before me, and I was welcomed with the same warmth and hospitality by generations of the family, some old enough to remember my grandfather and grandmother. My three sisters Marie, Brigid and Gai and I have made the journey, several times between us. Brigid, one of my older sisters, took a daughter and a son on her visits. So with the return of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren the family is knit together again.

An Irish "cousin," his grandmother one of our maternal grandmother's sisters, visited us here in New Zealand in 2010 while in the country for work reasons. He met members of the family and gave us a copy of his father's funeral card. He returned again in 2015 and visited my mother, who at 92 was largely disconnected from day to day life. But she recognised his soft Irish accent and immediately recalled the names of villages and townlands she'd written letters to 60 years earlier. "I've waited a long time for you to come to see me," she said to him.

I lived in Ireland for most of 1984, and have felt no need to return, though I may do so. I remember my excitement crossing the Irish Sea on the ferry, arriving in Dublin in the early morning. I bought *The Irish Times*, the national newspaper, to read with breakfast. A front page story detailed the names of the priests who officiated at the funeral mass of a well-known citizen, so I realised immediately the prominent role the Roman Catholic Church played in Irish society, much more so than any church in New Zealand.

I enjoyed my time in Ireland, meeting and staying with family, a few of whom remembered Johannah and Michael as young people. I walked some of the lanes and the

hills that they would've walked in Tipperary. I remember the warm hospitality of my cousins in Tipperary, Dublin and Sligo. I loved many aspects of the culture: the writing in *The Irish Times* and other publications, detailed, energetic and witty; the beauty of a stained glass window in the Dublin Municipal Gallery, possibly one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen; the music, from the energy of pub sessions, to *The Brendan Voyage* in which the Uilleann pipes play with the backing of a modern orchestra; the land, and the coast line, which all hold stories. I visited the stream Brendan is believed to have left from on his voyage across the Atlantic to America, and Maeve's cairn on the North West Atlantic coast, the funeral mound of a woman warrior.

For six months I lived on the Dingle Peninsula, in Kerry, the South Western Gaeltacht where Irish was still spoken by some as a first language. I bought a book for my mother at the bookshop in Dingle Village, *Peig: The autobiography of Peig Sayers of the Great Blasket Island*. Peig had told the story to her son in Irish and he translated it into English. Island life had changed since Peig's lifetime. I visited the island off the South West coast: the Atlantic calm in fine weather and raging when it turned. I understood then that the culture of that part of Ireland was changing and much more has altered over the decades.

I visited Lissadell in County Sligo in the northwest, the country estate of upper class Anglo Irish sisters, Constance and Eva Gore Booth. Constance was a prominent activist for Irish sovereignty, active in the 1916 rising. There I remembered the poem Yeats had written, decrying her political involvement. I felt ambivalent about his perspective so, though I visited his grave, within sight of Ben Bulbin, instead of investing time and money in a Yeats summer school, I looked for women's stories about Ireland. I brought *Unmanageable Revolutionaries: Women and Irish Nationalism* and met Margaret Ward, who wrote it, in Belfast. It gives insight into how much of women's involvement in Irish history had been made invisible. Eamon De Valera, Ireland's first President described them as "unmanageable revolutionaries." Later I bought a collection of Derry-born journalist Nell McCafferty's newspaper stories: sharp, funny, satirical, described by Irish poet Eavan Boland, as "the writing of a passionate witness." I left Ireland with poetry by Mary Dorcey, whose work challenged more conservative Irish society.

Even then in Dublin, I saw the impact of overseas-owned multinationals, there because of very advantageous tax rules, and the effect on working people of the easy movement of large amounts of capital in and out of the country. Now the “Celtic tiger” has collapsed, young people are again having to leave Ireland to find work. They seemed to surround me in Christchurch, young professionals bringing skills, talents and qualifications: designers, engineers, my yoga teacher, a beauty therapist, very different from the generations of my grandparents and great grandparents. Many have come to help rebuild the city after the earthquakes in 2010 and 2011.

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From the family farm, along the coast south from Oamaru, owned now by my brother Kevin and sister-in-law Clare, you can see the sweep of the coast running south east, down to Moeraki. Below, on the flat, is the house that my father’s parents came to, from Central Otago, via Southland, where he and his sisters and brothers grew up. My father bought the adjacent farm when he married, and moved up the hill to the house where I grew up with my sisters and brother. Now there is a new house, home to another generation who have grown up within sight and sound of the Pacific Ocean to the east, the Kakanui mountains to the west. This generation of daughters and sons will make what they will of their great grandparents, grandparents and parents’ Irish and New Zealand Irish culture and history. Caitlin, one of the daughters of the family, who is studying law and politics at Otago University, has plans to study for a semester at a university in Dublin. But the land and the buildings hold the stories of four generations of the family, a turangawaewae for this generation and those to come: a place to stand, to tell family stories and to remember.

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As I take the road south to Dunedin, which I did for much of my younger life though I lived in Auckland for nearly thirty years, my attention is drawn to the names on road signs.

From Oamaru along the coast road to Kakanui where the river runs into the sea, out onto Highway One and through Herbert, past signs for Camp Iona, Glencoe and Tain St. Down to Hampden, past Lancaster, York and Chester Streets, over Big Kuri then Little

Kuri bridges, further on past the turn off to Moeraki, then to Palmerston with its monument to James McKenzie, the Scottish parliamentarian. Continuing on through Waikouaiti and past McGregor, Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Kildare streets then down into Waitati and on into Dunedin.

Maori, Scottish, English and Irish names tell the history of the settlement of this land, echoing the past and creating the present. As I drive I think about these names. The culture that calls to me is of the Celt and the Gael. What of these cultures is there here in New Zealand now?

It is people first who most potently carry culture, through their language, traditions, institutions and architectural styles, their clothes, food, music, their ways of thinking and beliefs. One clearly articulated belief about New Zealanders has been that they are “a passionless people,” an opinion I’ve never agreed with. The people who gave me life and have to a large extent shaped my choices come from a culture passionate about words, beliefs and the possibilities the world holds.

My mother’s father, Michael McDonald, one of about 14 children, arrived in New Zealand before the First World War. Tipperary parish records establish no date of birth. His surname McDonnell was changed to McDonald on arrival in New Zealand, whether misspelt by an immigration officer who could not understand his accent, or as my mother suggests, because of the strong anti-Irish, anti-Catholic feeling that was common when he arrived. He had come to my grandmother’s relations in Ashhurst, in the Manawatu, and helped to build the Ashhurst dam. We still have some of his letters sent to my grandmother, in Ireland, between 1909 and 1912. He longed for her, *“Tis the only wish of my heart that someday we shall meet to part no more.”* .... *“I would always be happy with you, it will be always my only object in life to promote your happiness every way I can.”* He was lonely too for familiar people and places, *“alone among strangers here I nearly go half mad.”* He wrote asking for news of families and places around Toomevara, Tipperary and thanked her for a newspaper, *“I cannot say how thankful I am to you for sending the paper. Indeed tis great pleasure to me to see an Irish paper or hear any home news.”*



He worked as a gardener at the Rotorua Botanical Gardens though he had been employed at a printing company in Dublin and again in Auckland and was an excellent bookbinder. He bound school text books for my mother and her sister and brothers. He gave my grandmother the opportunity to choose whether he stayed in a city job or went farming, and since she chose the latter they became dairy farmers. He taught himself Maori, classical Greek and Esperanto and he would read anything he could find. My mother recalls him sitting on a bus reading every word of a bus ticket. He was a politically minded man and a Labour Party supporter who taught his children about Irish history and Irish patriots. Michael never stood for the playing of *God Save the King* in picture theatres, long ago now. My aunty Mary remembered that Johannah did not approve of that behaviour so would not go to the pictures with him. Aunty Mary also recalled her father teaching them about Irish patriots Robert Emmett, Wolfe Tone, Padriag Pearce and Michael Collins.

My mother's mother, Johannah Leamy, one of seven sisters and two brothers, came from rural Tipperary to join Michael, they were married in Auckland in 1921. I have the wooden trunk she brought with her. A compassionate, diplomatic woman, she was in the milking shed with Michael very early in the morning and back again around 3pm, a life of hard physical work, raising two daughters and four sons. My aunt recalled coming home from school in 1935 to find her mother crying because she had got word that her mother in Tipperary had died. Before she left Ireland Johannah had lived through the fighting and the destruction that the Black and Tans wrecked on Tipperary. I remember sitting on her bed listening to her stories of Irish women who had fraternised with the soldiers, their heads were shaven and they were tarred and feathered. She talked with pleasure about dancing at the crossroads.

My mother recalled Johannah supporting Michael Collins and the new Irish Republic, as respite for people from a fierce civil war. Sixty years later the violence was still not over and I began to understand the complexity of the relationship between Ireland and England when I spent time in Derry in 1984. The centre of the city was marked by bombed out buildings, armoured cars patrolled the streets and military helicopters flew their rounds. Young men threw stones at armed soldiers from the walls of the city. I stayed with friends of friends in the Bogside, the Catholic area outside the old city walls

and on my way to the bookshop I volunteered in, walked where the Bloody Sunday shootings took place in 1972. I was cautioned to keep away from parked cars that had been there for some time. I was asked one day “Are you Orange or are you Green?” Casually and naively I answered “Green.” I had some understanding of the divide between these two different communities and traditions, but I could never have understood the violence unless I’d been there.

Johannah and Michael spoke some Irish Gaelic at home: my mother and aunt remember them speaking it. My oldest sister Marie applied herself to learning some of the language two generations later, here in New Zealand, and I lived for a time in an Irish speaking household just out of Dingle.

My father’s mother Margaret Kinney arrived in New Zealand in the 1880s as a small girl with her mother Catherine, who came with five children from County Antrim, to meet her husband who was already here. One child died on their journey through to Central Otago. The *Otago Witness* November 3, 1883, records “On the arrival of the express train at Palmerston from Dunedin on Thursday morning, it was discovered that one of the passengers had died on the way up. The deceased was the daughter (aged 10 years old) of two of the passengers, by the ship *Nelson*, named Kinney, and was with her parents on their way to join their friends at Hyde. She had been ailing in Dunedin for some days previously, but was considered by the medical man who attended her here as able to stand the fatigue of the journey.”

My father told stories of the isolation Catherine suffered in Central, after life in a close social network in Ireland. Their cottage was named “The Fillyburn” and my sister Gai and her husband Paul gave the name to their family home in North Otago to honour that connection. As a young woman, Margaret was a dressmaker in Central, getting orders through a department store in Dunedin. After she and Patrick married they moved to Southland then to North Otago in about 1937. Their wedding notice in the *New Zealand Tablet*, of 25 May, 1911, reports that “The bride’s present to the bridegroom was a handsomely mounted umbrella, whilst the bridegroom’s present to the bride was a gold watch and chain...” a watch I was given by my father and which I wind mindful of both him and his mother. Sometimes Margaret and one of my aunts hand-milked cows in the early morning. My father recalls that his mother, always with knitting needles in hand,

“knit the barn and byre together.” Her skills breeding laying hens helped to see the family through the Depression.

My father’s father, Patrick, was born and grew up in Central Otago. He was Patrick as his father was, as my father was, and as my younger brother Kevin and his wife Clare’s oldest son is. I would have been Patricia if I had been born two days later on 17 March, St Patrick’s Day: it is my middle name instead. All of the first and second and third generation of our family in New Zealand were Irish Catholic. Family, work, and church community would have defined their lives, as they did for my parents.

With this background I’d have been unlikely to be waving Union Jacks, nor taking more than a polite interest in our constitutional monarchy. While the written history that I was brought up on emphasised how very English New Zealand is, it is a story that never rang true for me. I grew up with other stories of historical events and other perspectives of prominent politicians. I realised quite early on that official history was stories written from certain points of view. Though our institutions of government and law and education were modelled on English institutions, my world was peopled by Irish and Scottish and Dutch people who had their own languages and cultures and whose energy and skill peopled and built New Zealand every bit as much and in as lasting a way as the English traditions and myths that shaped the first century and a half of post Maori settlement in this land. The lasting irony for me is the Irish and the Scots participated in the colonisation of Maori here in New Zealand, often with the army of the British Empire. In many cases they were leaving behind the grinding poverty caused through the colonisation of their own homelands and contributed to that cycle being perpetuated here for Maori.

Looking to my own experience of Irish culture in New Zealand I recognise a facility with words and particularly the art of storytelling, of taking a detail of an ordinary day, embellishing it and taking pleasure in the telling of it, as my father Pat and his brother Dan would, until age quietened their stories and death finally silenced their voices. Their Irish/English turn of phrase, inventive and colourful, now lives in memory only.

My mother had a tenacious sense of history which her sister and brothers had as well. It may well be an Irish trait to remember, or indeed to be unable to forget the past, but in

another sense the past is held always in train with the present. This is not unlike Maori culture, where the past is in front in full view where it is known and understood and it is the future which is behind, beyond sight and yet to be comprehended.

For me it was a rural lifestyle, and the hospitality of the home, the kitchen and food offered with warmth and love. I remember one windy night sitting at the dinner table, in the farm house just outside Oamaru. The wind was howling around the macrocarpa hedge, “It’s the banshee” my mother said: the woman fairy from Irish cultural tradition which presaged death or some misfortune. I don’t recall any tragic follow on from that night, but my mother obviously had the imaginative consciousness that her parents bought with them from Ireland. I have clear memories of my father’s Kinney cousins in Central Otago who still milked the house cow by hand and churned their own butter, a lifestyle that is gone now, as are all that generation of the family.

I have some understanding of what it is to be part of a clan or a tribe, linked by blood and common ancestors. I have experience of extended family gatherings of several generations where discussion ranges widely and where expressing an opinion is encouraged if not expected. We gather to celebrate and to grieve and in that grief to celebrate again, in the Irish tradition of the wake, to share stories, food, music, lubricated by good spirits.

For my primary and most of my secondary schooling I went to Catholic schools. I remember taunts from nearby state school students of “Catholic dogs stink like frogs in their mother’s bathing togs” though it never seemed to bother me much. I was taught by nuns of the Dominican Order, many of them Irish born, or of Irish families, including my mother’s only sister, Mary. We buried our much loved aunty Mary in late 2012, celebrating her life with her Dominican community and her nearly seventy years as a registered teacher. She taught me Irish history in secondary school history classes, and I remember her stories of the Irish Land League to this day. In school girl Latin classes we translated excerpts from Caesar’s Gallic Wars, a history written by the victor in a campaign of pacification of one Celtic people. Pax Romana was later replaced by Pax Britannica, at equally as high cost for the Gaels of a later era. At Otago University I translated Old English poetry and still enjoy the enduring beauty of “The Wanderer” and “The Seafarer” and the language of the eighth century saga of *Beowulf*. I have read

a translation of *The Tain*, the epic of early Irish literature, but I would have loved to have studied Irish literature, in Irish, if a course had been available. As it was I studied Irish history and the poetry of Yeats. Now there is an Irish and Scottish Studies Programme at Otago which holds much of interest to the many New Zealanders who share these backgrounds. When living in Ireland, taking a break from journalism, I was taught to teach English as a Foreign Language in Dublin. The institute was on Grafton St, a fashionable shopping area, and with windows opened I could hear the buskers on the street below that runs between Stephen's Green and the bridge crossing the Liffey, to O'Connell St. Being taught to teach English by fine Irish teachers has been one of my favourite life experiences. The subtleties of accents in Dublin alone meant I had to concentrate as hard to understand my class mates, as they had to understand my Kiwi accent.

Language then clearly holds culture for me, but culture is always changing, as is language, because people are changed and shaped by time and place and circumstance. Buildings and architectural styles hold their story longer, if they are left standing and cared for so that coming generations can see and understand that story.

As I drive South, there is a series of basilicas, magnificent old buildings, transplanted a world away from their cultural origins, a legacy of Irish Catholicism and the generations who built them. While I admire the architecture, the rituals of the institution are for me now meaningful only in a family context. My grandparents and parents loved the church and many of the clergy and religious sisters. Though I acknowledge the courage and commitment of those who dedicate their life to serving people through the church, I have long since lost respect for an institution for which being male is a prerequisite for public leadership. After powerful experiences of ritual-making at the women's peace camp at Greenham Common, southwest of London, in 1984/85, I have spent three decades celebrating rituals associated with the changing seasons, rooted in Scottish and Irish traditions, and have a series of interviews about this published under the title of *Faces of the Goddess*.

In Christchurch, a city that prides itself on its Englishness and the Anglican cathedral in the square, it was always the domes of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, the Roman Catholic basilica, standing tall with the Port Hills in the background, which

drew my attention. Since the earthquakes, which destroyed both buildings and which I experienced living in the city, I have understood how the dominant narrative in that provincial city still attempts to put the Roman Catholic basilica beyond the pale of social importance. It was the soaring wooden arches of Knox Church that withstood the quakes. However the quakes may yet shake up that old social divide.

Two hours south on Highway One, as I drive through Timaru, the Basilica of the Sacred Heart dominates the roadside view. Further south, in Oamaru, my hometown, graced with Victorian white stone buildings, there is St Patrick's basilica. Brigid, one of my older sisters was piped out of that basilica, by Highland pipes, when she married into a family who played the Scottish pipes. My father was piped out of the basilica, decades later, by an Irish Uilleann piper, as we carried him out to lay him to rest after his requiem mass.

Carrying on to Dunedin, the spires of First Church in Dunedin stand as a testament to the Free Church of Scotland settlers who built their community almost geographically as far away as possible from their homeland. The University of Otago stands likewise as the fruit of the Scots' respect for education. Driving out South there is another St Patrick's basilica, and if you have reason to drive on down into Southland there is yet another basilica, built by the Irish community in an area where the soft Southern burr is a legacy of the Scots who were the predominant immigrant group in the province in the 1860s and 1870s.

Another road I've driven often is from Oamaru up the Waitaki Valley into the Mackenzie Country to see the lakes and pay my respects to Aoraki/Mt Cook. The area is named for the Scotsman James McKenzie who, with his dog, drove sheep – that were not his own – through a pass in the hills to hide them on the wide flat plain land that now carries his name. The legend of the man and his dog are told in story and song as part of the Pakeha settlement of New Zealand. I drive past the sign for Irishman's Creek then around to Lake Tekapo where the statue of a dog stands as a memorial to the importance of sheep dogs in the development of farming in that mountain country. Commissioned in 1968, there is a Scots Gaelic acknowledgement on the monument, Beannachdan Air Na Cu Caorach: Blessings on the Sheepdog.

I ask myself what there is in this country now in very concrete ways, and in the psyche of New Zealanders, that is a legacy of our Celtic forebears. What Celtic or Gaelic traditions live here in Aotearoa now, lapped by the waters of the Pacific, Te Moana nui a Kiwa, brought over by the generations by people who journeyed far, in early generations on ships across the ocean, like the great-ocean going waka of Polynesian and Maori?

### *The Celts and the Gaels*

Who are the Celts and the Gaels? Irish broadcaster and BBC documentary maker Frank Delaney (1989, p. 67) writes that Celts were northern hemisphere tribal groupings now identified with Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, Brittany, and Galicia in Spain. Geological, archaeological and anthropological evidence provides evidence for the Celts being found all over Europe.

Historians and archaeologists have disputed the origins of Celts, however using DNA evidence, archaeologist Stephen Oppenheimer argues that people likely moved through areas of what are now France and Spain, following the Atlantic Coast up the Iberian Peninsula, bringing their culture with them. Movements of people occurred at different times following ice ages and the covering and uncovering of land areas by the rise and fall of oceans (Oppenheimer, 2006). Historians and those who look to literature and myth for answers consider the Celts came originally from Central Asia (Markdale, 1993, p. 107).

As an applied linguist, I look to language to identify who is a Celt and a Gael. Linguists categorise “Celtic” languages in two divisions: The Gaels of Ireland, Scotland and the Isle of Man occupy the Goidelic or “Q” category, with their languages Irish or Erse, Scottish Gaelic and Manx, while the languages of the Cornish, Welsh and Bretons fall into the Brythonic “P” category. Delaney writes that Celtic languages are a branch of the Indo-European family tree “with sounds and soundings” from the languages of Greece and Rome, Germanic, Slavonic and Middle Eastern languages and language families (1989, p. 159).

The Gaels then are Irish, Scottish and Manx. From about the fifth century CE “Scoti,” from what is now Northern Ireland, crossed the Northern Atlantic into areas of the Inner

Hebrides and of Argyll in Scotland, forming a Gaelic kingdom of Dalriada. It was threatened by the Pict and Viking invasions in later centuries (Encyclopedia Britannica publication about Ireland, 2014). The Isle of Man is also geographically close to Ireland and Scotland.

### ***The Scots and Irish in New Zealand***

Canadian historian Donald Harman Akenson writes (2002, p. 191) that by the 1890s the Scots were 21.7% of the population, the Irish were 18.7% and the English, collapsed with the Welsh, were 50.9%. He suggests that between 1840 and 1936 “a reasonable estimate – by Tom Brooking – is that roughly 117,000 Scots migrated to New Zealand and if it was said that at least 100,000 Irish migrated it would be difficult to argue against.”

For the Scots, NZ History.net.nz records that between 1840 and 1914 sixty percent of Scottish migrants originated in Lowland areas though there was a strong representation from the far north and off shore islands. New Zealand historian James Belich writes there is probably no other country in the world, outside of Scotland, in which the Scots had more influence “.....New Zealand is the neo-Scotland” (2001, p. 221). However he argues that identifying people through ethnic difference has been difficult in New Zealand, because the use of the word “British” collapsed significant differences amongst English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh people particularly.

Akenson (1990) acknowledged in an earlier book, *Half the World from Home: Perspectives on the Irish in New Zealand 1860-1950*, the difficulty of estimating numbers of Irish migrants to New Zealand, because Irish people left from English and Scottish ports and may have been recorded as such. Many also came through Australia. NZ History.net.nz notes there was a preference for Protestant Irish among New Zealand immigration authorities. Looking to the present over half a million New Zealanders have Irish ancestry (Te Ara, 2012).

I see and hear glimpses of these people all around me in New Zealand: red hair and blue eyes, a peaches and cream complexion, or dark hair and olive skin, a lilt in the voice, “a wee lass or a wee laddie,” tartans and tweeds, a fine single malt, the swirl of the bagpipes and the wail of the Uilleann pipes, or the light airy melody of a tin whistle.



There are the Claddagh ring and other Celtic designs of the intertwining knots symbolising the interconnection of all life. There is a certain dry wit and turn of phrase that produces a particular sense of humour. But then perhaps I'm predisposed to recognise these physical and psychological traits as they are my genetic inheritance. What else is there?

More obvious are big public gatherings like Highland Games held in many areas including Waipu north of Auckland, settled by Scots who travelled to New Zealand, via Nova Scotia. Some smaller rural areas such as Hororata in South Canterbury have recently organised Highland games as a community event, using those Scottish traditions as an expression of identity. Scottish Country Dancing and Highland Dancing are popular around the country. Pipe bands are a presence in almost every public parade from smaller country towns to larger metropolitan areas. Large numbers of New Zealanders who claim a Scottish connection can still attend a ceremony here in New Zealand where the haggis is ceremonially addressed. Curling, a Scottish sport similar to bowls played on ice, is popular in Central Otago where it's cold enough for the dams to freeze over and provide a rink. But it is also played in indoor rinks in Naseby and around the country. There are traditions celebrated in schools with a connection to the Scottish Presbyterian Church like; St Kentigerns in Auckland, Lindisfarne College in Hastings, St Andrews in Christchurch, and John McGlashan College in Dunedin.

Ard Feis, national Irish cultural gatherings, involving traditional Irish sports and dance, music and poetry, are also held. There are also Irish dance schools around the country. Irish pubs are popular venues where music and songs are played that are a link to the traditions of times past as well to the present. Large amounts of Guinness and other alcohol is consumed, also a traditional occupation. St Patrick's Day, the national day of Ireland, is a reason for many New Zealanders to celebrate, and with a party that big it's an excuse for many more to join in. While I cringe at the "plastic shamrock" artificiality of some of them I feel more comfortable going into Irish pubs than any other in New Zealand. I had my fiftieth birthday celebration at the Clare Inn on Dominion Road in Auckland, because it felt like a comfortable place to stand and celebrate. When I'm away from New Zealand I gravitate to Irish pubs like the one in inner city Melbourne where my mother and I ate and relaxed when we went to visit an

Irish cousin of hers some years ago. That pub I remember had a copy of the Irish Republic's Declaration of Independence on the wall and this drew me in emotionally as I feel it is part of my political and cultural background.

All around New Zealand there are active Irish and Scottish Societies, and Irish and Scottish shops that sell merchandise which for many of us hold memories of what we know only from stories and these stories are of lives now past and cultures that have changed with time. There is a list of addresses and websites at the back of this book.

I took the road north one summer, north of Auckland to The Gaidhealtachd, a Celtic Summer School, a gathering at Whangarei Heads that has been running there for over twenty years. It is a time and place for Celtic traditions from all around the world to be expressed and nurtured, through language, visual arts, music and song, dance, food, sharing of history and stories of diaspora, along with traditions like the fine art of tasting a good whiskey. Banners of six Celtic nations around the walls carried ancient symbols including, the dragon of Wales (Cymru), the harp of Ireland (Eire) and the lion of Scotland (Alba), along with the flags of Cornwall, Brittany and the Isle of Man. I felt comfortable there. For those who are the inheritors of these cultures and traditions there is much to learn and enjoy in the traditions we still practice far away from the homelands. At the same time traditions have been acculturated to the land we live in. At one of the *ceilidh* held each night one of the musicians wore his kilt with jandals, surely a symbol of a Southern Celt, acclimatising to our summer.

Another ceilidh I took part in later, further north in the Hokianga, which drew locals and visitors to enjoy dance and music, included a number of local Maori, wearing tartan and playing an instrument, their families linked by ties of blood to Scottish clan traditions, not so dissimilar in many ways to Maori tribal traditions.

It is ironic that my grandparents left Ireland seeking a better life, yet they became part of waves of settlers and migrants who caused land to be alienated from Maori, which consequently set up many of the circumstances for Maori in New Zealand that native Irish had suffered: a struggle to gain control of their own land and to speak their own indigenous language. Scottish people too migrated as a consequence of colonial control of land and resources, as well as the impacts of industrialisation and wars, so causing

alienation of land and ways of life from Maori. It is also ironic that the Scottish parliamentarian McKenzie, who introduced legislation to break up the big landholdings allowing more people land ownership, did not treat Maori with due justice. This topic is explored in each interview through a question which asks whether the Irish and Scottish experience of colonisation in their homelands influenced how they might have related to Maori in the colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand.

### ***Interviewees and interviews***

Out of personal interest and independent of this PhD research I had already interviewed five people with a Scottish or Irish background prior to commencing this project. For this narrative inquiry I did a total of forty interview narratives over four years, two collected through email only. Initially I planned to interview people from broadly Celtic backgrounds, but after a visit to the Welsh Choir in Auckland and interviewing five people there I realised doing the transcriptions that I didn't relate as easily to their experiences. Because of my own family background I decided to focus on the Irish and the Scots.

Interviews took me from Dunedin to Northland, from the west coast of the South Island to the Bay of Plenty on the east coast of the North Island. I chose people whose lives I consider illustrate different aspects of involvement with cultural traditions. Another person would perhaps have chosen differently. There are of course people of Irish and Scottish backgrounds in this country who want or need nothing to do with these expressions of culture.

Interviews are arranged under headings of business, Gaelic language, music and song, writing, creating visual arts and documentary making, spirituality and religion, sport, and holding the stories through genealogy and the museum sector. There is of course crossover of topics between sections as the same ten questions were the structure for each interview.

Irish broadcaster and writer Frank Delaney believes that the deepest basis of Celtic art grew from a dependence on nature, reflected in spiral patterns. The spiral symbol of the koru, which has grown from Maori consciousness in this land, is also informed by the natural world and energy that moves from the past, through the present to the future,

into death and beyond. Joseph McLean, of Maori Scottish, Irish and English cultural backgrounds, from the Hokianga, drew the connection, in conversation, between the triple spirals in Celtic art and the use of three fingers on a human figure in Maori carving representing the past, the present and the future.

Like the interweaving patterns in Celtic and Maori visual arts, the stories in this collection weave in time and place, with the same insistent energy of life which finds expression also in Irish and Scottish music. Embarking on this exploration I hear the sound of Scottish tenors from my father's records and I hold the memory of him, his sisters and brother, dancing the Lancers and scottishes in the Scottish Hall, in Oamaru. So let's imagine the music has begun. It's a high energy reel, celebrating life and the lives of all the people, and their families, whose stories are shared here.

## Interviews

### Doing Business

Ann Corry, kiltmaker, Helean Kilts

*Ann Corry is the first kilt maker in the Southern Hemisphere to have held the Scottish Qualifications Authority certificate in traditional handcraft kilt making skills. Trained by Frank Helean, of Helean Kilts, Dunedin, which she and her husband bought in 1989, and qualified in both tailoring and kilt making, Ann continued to produce garments in the traditional way until her retirement in 2012.*

*Helean Kiltmakers in Dunedin, established in 1901 by Patrick Joseph Helean, is the oldest kilt making business in New Zealand. An Englishman from Middlesex, Patrick learned the tailoring trade in Christchurch and began his own tailoring business in 1901 employing Scots men – tailors and kiltmakers – who had been in the British army in India and had come to New Zealand on a government immigration scheme. His business became well-known for making traditional pipe band kilts. His son, Frank Joseph Helean, trained in tailoring and kilt making by his father, took over the business in 1935 and ran it till 1951. During this time Helean kilts were adopted as school uniforms. After World War Two Francis (Frank) Patrick Helean entered the family business and continued in it till 1989, when he retired. During this time kilts became a more popular choice for schools. The business continued to make uniforms for pipe bands and Highland dancers.*

*In the small shop adjacent to her work room she points to the rack of kilts:*

The little red kilt up there is a dancing kilt. The blue one with the olive green is a school kilt, the blue on the other side is a pipe band kilt. That's a red Gordon, tartan for the Auckland City of Sails Pipe Band. The browny one over there was just made for a young man who is a piper in Christchurch, and to my knowledge that is a reasonably new tartan as it's the first we've made in that tartan. He wanted something different from a pipe band kilt. A lot of pipe band kilts are in the Royal Stewart or the Black Watch, or that type of thing which is quite dark, or bright in way of Royal Stewart. So that's different and it's really nice, it's called Strathnaver. The muted shades in the

tartans come from the Scottish battles. When farmers used to go in to plough the fields, where the battle had been fought, they'd bring up tartans which had been in the ground and had gone those muted colours. So they used to have those colours, and now they produce a lot of tartans in those shades. They are still the original patterns of the original set. I must admit on our last visit to Scotland when we went to Culloden, you just felt the battle was a waste of life, precious life, it's quite quite sad.

As people get older they seem to become more interested in their own background. I think people are more interested in the history of their own families these days. Understanding genealogies and Scottish clans is much more popular, or that's how I see it.

My great grandparents, Houlistons, came from Peebles and Paisley in Scotland and settled in Te Houke, in South Otago, just south of Balclutha. My grandfather was the drum major in the Balclutha Pipe Band for a time, he also got involved with the Taieri pipe band and that possibly got my aunts involved. My mother was a dancer, my aunt was a piper. I suppose it's been born into the family really, although I'm a New Zealander, born and bred in Dunedin and I'm still here. It was something we always did as a family, something everybody could go to and they enjoyed, they enjoyed the music, it evolved from there. I think it's really something that's in you if you want to do these things.

I've been a Highland dancer myself, both my sisters were Highland dancers, my niece and my nephew were both Highland dancers. I've also been involved in Scottish country dancing for 48 years, as a dancer, a teacher and a judge. Scottish country dancing is done as a team of eight, or six or ten people, whereas although you do set dances with the Highland dancing, mostly it's solo. You are elevating a lot in Highland dancing, but Scottish country dancing is quite sedate, so as you get older it is much easier. Still we don't get a lot of young people in Dunedin. We've had one or two younger people come along, the youngest are in their late 30s. In Highland dancing a lot of young people learn, leave and then return when they get older. And having been a dancer too, I think I have a lot more connection within the dancing ranks in New Zealand, because I judged as well.

I've been brought up with this cultural connection to Scotland through my grandparents, so that is just my normal way of life. My daughter tried dancing when she was quite young, but she didn't want to continue. She decided that she wanted to play the drums. She was in John Maglashan Pipe Band where she became the lead drummer and then she was in the City of Dunedin Pipe Band as a snare drummer. She's been very successful. She went to the Edinburgh Tattoo with the City of Dunedin in 2003. I was delighted when she wanted to be a drummer and a piper and I was very proud of that. She gave it up to go to college and now she plays for the Temuka Pipe Band.

I started working at Helean Kilts when I left school in 1963. I was seventeen, saw an ad in the paper for a person to learn tailoring and trained under Frances or Frank Patrick Helean, the grandson of Patrick Joseph Helean. I learned tailoring skills and to make a kilt in the traditional way. I was a Highland dancer then so that background may have been an influence. Also because of my interest in sewing, I enjoyed hand sewing too. I've always been a knitter and done embroidery so that is probably why I really enjoyed it. I still enjoy it though you have to be accurate because you don't want your stitches to show. You have to be accurate and I think that is a good thing.

The business has been mine since 1989. We make kilts for schools, pipe bands, dancers and individuals. We can make hundreds of kilts in one year for schools, mostly here in Dunedin, then the next year not as many. As a school uniform they are an easy garment for alterations. We have cut down overall on school kilts because many schools are going out of them as a uniform. We make kilts for people all over New Zealand, in Australia and England and have also sold in Germany. Most private individuals who buy a kilt wear it because of a Scottish ancestry. We also make tailored jackets, coats and waistcoats, as well as women's fashion skirts and slacks and a variety of other accessories. We import some accessories from Scotland as well. Helean Kilts has the only licence to make the New Zealand tartan which was designed for the New Zealand Piping and Dancing Association. We made kilts for sixteen dancers who went to the Edinburgh Tattoo in 2002.

Small is good. I wouldn't want to get any bigger. We really are here carrying on a tradition and I think we need to keep it that way. Small amounts of good quality work, in my mind, is better than lots of work which is not of good quality. That's how I work.

The people who work with me are not trained when they come here. We have to train them, mainly because there's a lot of handwork and you've got to be accurate. It's different for school kilts: Most of the school work is machine made. For the rest of the kilts you have to do a little bit of machining, but hand stitching is really the top thing here and you really have got to be accurate. You start off with a plain straight piece of material and with everything done by hand you work it into a kilt. You've got stripes to match, not only one way but they must match the other and so you can't have anything off line because it doesn't look good and it isn't good. It's got to be right. It takes a long time to become accurate with speed. A kilt normally will take 16 to 18 hours to make right through. Even working at speed it takes sixteen hours minimum to make a kilt which is lined. All the pleating is done by hand, there are no machines that will pleat it through.

Our fabrics for our school work were usually sourced from within New Zealand, but the fabric for all our pipe bands and private-wear of any description is imported from Scotland. However just at the moment we don't get many of our materials from our New Zealand mill since it sort of went into a bit of a recession. We are not really sure whether they are starting up again. They'd like to start up again, but at this stage we don't really know. The last lot of fabric I got for our schools I had to get from Australia, from Melbourne where there are several textile mills. I think that is really sad when we are a wool producing country and we cannot actually produce wool fabric in our own country. To be quite honest I'm all for New Zealand made, I know we specifically can't get the quality of fabric locally for pipe bands, but for our school work I do like to have that.

We deal with about three or four Scottish mills for different things. One particular mill is for dancing and if we want a good quality fine material we deal with another mill and then when we want material for pipe bands we have another mill that we deal with. I carried on from Mr Helean when I took over from him, and basically we've kept with those mills, however we've added one mill since I took over. We went over in 1996 and I made a point of going around to see the mills and making myself known. When you send a message, you know who you're talking to, which I think is good.



I went back again in 1997, when I did my equivalent of the New Zealand qualifications. We did one through the Scottish Qualification Authority. I did my hand work skills for kilt making which basically works out to what we have here, but they specifically have one for kilt making, whereas here in New Zealand everything is more machine made. There are not enough people doing it to warrant having a specific qualification for it here in New Zealand, but over there, there is. They have kilt makers in their army so they have people who are required continually. I was the first person in the Southern Hemisphere to get that qualification. We do know there is a lady in Australia who was the next one and now there is a lady who emigrated from Scotland who is living in New Plymouth and she went through the kilt school. I think we do have another kilt maker in New Zealand now. She contacted me so I keep in regular contact with her.

You may have a group who want a new tartan and making a new tartan follows a certain process. They go to the Scottish Tartan Authority and they ask what you would like, what colours you want and they work around those colours. When the New Zealand tartan was made for the Dominion Piping Association we gave them a list of colours we wanted in it, and what the predominant colour needed to be. We wanted something to represent the blue sky, the sun, and people, so we had brown put on it which represented the link with the Maori people, we had red, which was the blood ties between people of New Zealand and Scotland, and the green of the pastures. Then they did up several different designs and in that way we had about three or four settings. We ended up going for the one we got because it looked clean, it had all the meaning, and it wasn't overpowering.

A lot of people will want a tartan for specific reasons, whether it's a new clan starting up or whether a clan itself has never had a specific family tartan, it might have been a "sept" of somebody else, because somebody married into it, then they want one of their own. Often what they do is they take the basic pattern of the one they belong to and they either eliminate some of the strips or they put in something else just to make it slightly different, but the connection is still there with the family they belong to. Once the association decides what they like and want, they then send it to the Tartan Society and they check through all their tartans to make sure there is nothing else like it. They

then apply to the Scottish authority to have it accepted. When they give the approval then it is then registered as a tartan with the Scottish Tartan Society. I have books up there (*pointing to the shelf behind her*) that would explain the process.

There are district tartans, because a lot of people do not have their own specific tartan and therefore they were more connected to an area than a family. There were a lot of people who came over from Norway and settled in Scotland and I think there would have been a lot of intermarriages. Here in New Zealand, Velma Nelson who devised the Otago tartan, which is blue and gold, also devised tartans that have been made into curtains and carpets, which were made for Glenfalloch, a public venue here in Dunedin. There was a Mr Coward who, along with the Alliance Textiles, which is no longer operating here in New Zealand, created a tartan called the Pride of New Zealand that has more dark charcoal colours and I know a lot of people wear that. I also know of local tartans, such as the one made for staff to wear at the casino.

My attitude to this cultural connection has never changed. I've always wanted to do the same, particularly in the kilt making business, which is not to lower any standards at all. That's why I went back and made sure I was doing things correctly so I wasn't downgrading anything. I want anything I produce to be as good if not better than what comes out of Scotland. The older I get the more fastidious I get, it's probably like a fear of mine. Every year and every day we are striving. A lot of our pipe bands have to get funds, they try to get supported by different big firms to get money to have their uniforms. If that money is not available and they can't raise that money themselves then we don't have the work either. So whatever we do it's got to be good. We do hire kilts for balls, weddings. You have your special times like Labour Weekend, February and March, holiday weekends, family reunions. Hopefully when we hire them out they come back and actually get one made.

I do like to go back to Scotland, I feel I have that connection. I think the landscape itself is so similar to our country here. I remember driving with friends when I was in Scotland and if I hadn't known better I could've been driving through Roxborough, in Central Otago, or through the Taieri area out of Dunedin. The architecture in Dunedin is similar too. You can go to Edinburgh and feel very much at home. You don't actually

feel like a visitor, you feel as if you are at home. Whereas when you go somewhere else, for instance America or China, I didn't feel at home.

I can't speak any Gaelic, I've never really thought about that before. I think it's because very few people speak the Gaelic themselves anymore. I don't know, I presume that those who do speak the Gaelic are probably people from the islands, which I've never really had anything to do with. It doesn't make me feel I need to learn anything. I feel comfortable when I go there, it feels the same, though in Scotland they speak English with a Scottish accent.

I do know that a lot of Scottish societies around at the moment are very low on membership. I'm not sure whether younger people have so much going on in their lives that they don't want to get involved. We are still getting people who join now, in their forties perhaps, who have always thought about it though have never done anything about it, but are now trying to find out their roots. So we are still getting a small number coming back, but they are the older people. And I do know in groups like the Burns Club and our own Scottish country dance club the numbers are not as good as we would like them to be. At the moment I don't think people are willing to be committed. I know we as Scottish country dancers have people come and go all the time. Maybe they have other things on, socialising perhaps. I don't know what it is. That's sort of sad, but people can come back to it. I don't think it's a stage you can write things off, because things go around, they come again.

Fraser Milne, owner/director of Whisky Galore

*Whisky Galore "purveyors of fine whisky," was housed in a two-storied wooden shop on Colombo St, Christchurch, when I first interviewed Fraser Milne. The shop survived the September 2010 earthquake with only a few bottles of whisky broken. But the February 2011 earthquake destroyed both shop and stock. However by December of that year, when I returned for a second interview, the business was in spacious new premises on Victoria St, with framed photos of Scottish distilleries lining the walls of the entrance.*

The whisky shop has been going since 2003, while importation of whisky started in 1993. We stock about 750 different whiskeys, we have Irish whiskeys, American bourbons, and Japanese malts, but the majority are from Scotland because they are the biggest producer. Who buys them? Well, everybody. We do get a lot of ex-pat Scots and people who have Scottish associations through family, in general it's a very broad market. We go out and about doing tastings all over New Zealand. We had one in Havelock North last Friday, there was about 38 people, probably three ex pat Scots and the rest were from 25 years old to an 80 year old, mostly just locals who enjoy a dram.

My father was a seed and grain merchant, which meant I was brought up in the biggest concentration of distilleries in the world, in the Strathspeigh/Strathbogie area. He sold seed and grain, mostly malting barley, so he'd buy the barley, get the farmer to grow it, buy it from the farmer and sell it to the maltster, which of course is the distiller, or was the distiller in those days, so the connections are very strong. The first part-time job I ever had, or weekend, school job, was at the local distillery. If you had asked me when I was twenty, would I be doing something like this, I would have laughed and said it's a hobby gone bad. We thoroughly enjoy it and you meet lots of folks.

We were very moderate, special occasion drinkers in Scotland, and a lot of my grandmothers' generation, the great-aunts were all temperance. A lot of people forget that the populations of Scotland and Ireland are pretty well divided, to this day, into anti and for. Most people fall somewhere in between a wee dram and not too much. And you find even in the distillery industry many people working in the industry don't drink at all, ever. The presumption that you are a Scot or Irish and so you like to drink is wrong.

These do not go together automatically, although I do fall into the category of liking a wee dram. It's a mood thing, my default one is probably Glen Farclas.

I did a lot of travelling and something about New Zealand gelled. I liked it, I felt at home. It wasn't a hard decision. I went back to Scotland after that and worked for a few years, but I could nae get New Zealand out of my mind. I was in the army, and left permanently when I was 24 or 25, so I'm a Scot born, bred and brought up. I was born in Keith in the Northern eastern Highlands of Scotland, came 25 years ago to New Zealand to have a look, liked it, and stayed.

I think to have an understanding of the language is important, especially when it refers to most of your mountains and rivers and place names. We were very lucky in the seventies when I was at school they emphasised that point, so most of my generation have a reasonable understanding. But it depends, focus on language without focus on education is a waste of time, education is more important than language in the broader context, I think people get the two mixed up. For a country to survive as a country in its own right or as people in its own right then you have to be forward thinking. And Scotland is very forward thinking and has benefited as such. It gives you the ability to do other things such as appreciate the language and the culture. If you are in a mode where you are not making progress in the modern world then you don't have that opportunity. I think that was recognised, talking of language, by the old folk and my folk were all Gaelic speakers, but they weren't worried about the Gaelic language they were more worried about the progress of future generation, sad but true. I have a degree of spoken phraseology, from my granny, although when I was at secondary school, 1972 to 1976, Gaelic was available, though not compulsory.

I've done a lot of things including the army and they've all educated me. But school, even now is still considered very important in the North of Scotland and there's a very large focus on education throughout, maybe not so much in the south, but certainly in the north.

I'll give you a very good example of people being part of the culture without seemingly having the language. A friend of mine in Scotland in the oil industry, which has had a big influence, is Dutch, his wife was Greek, their son was born in Sumatra,

they came to Scotland when he was about two and she sadly died, so he was bought up by a Scottish nanny. When Alexander got married a couple of years ago, he was in full Highland regalia, he's a Scot, no Scottish blood, but he's a Scot never-the-less. There's a lot to it, it's not just about accents and background.

I've always known what it is to be a Scot and I've always appreciated the fact I'm a Scot and it's always been one of the most important things to me. If anything, my views have been substantiated over the years of what it means to be a Scotsman.

When you're in the company of other Scots, the main illustration is an understanding of all sorts of things including the humour, which quite often other folk don't get. I don't know why that is, it's just the way it is. Humour and talking about things that other people probably don't get, I think that's probably common in a lot of cultures. It's a very dry humour in Scotland, like the saying "you had to be there." The humour varies of course too, the North of Scotland has a particularly dry sense of humour, whereas the middle of Scotland is a wee bit different. Dry humour is not so much about telling a joke, it's about taking the context within a story and playing on it and you find Scots do that very well, it can often be as much as one word. In the company of other Scots people there is a shared understanding of what it is to be a Scot, it's like being a Kiwi, you're brought up with it, you know what it is, simple things like, what is winter? You try explaining a winter in Scotland to someone in New Zealand, you can't, you've got to live the winter. It's the same with summer, we can make the most of the summer, whereas people not used to Scottish weather don't know what summer is. It's very simple things, like a common shared experience of cooking.

I think Scotland has progressed from where we wanted her to be in the seventies to now having its own Parliament, devolution looks quite likely. That was always, particularly for my generation, a very strong wish and dream, especially where I'm from, because it was a hugely Scottish nationalist area and still is, so I think that's become a reality. That's just reiterated and confirmed our point of view. Not all agree of course, like everything else. Some people believe Britain is Britain and we should be part of Britain, the parliament should be a British parliament, that's still a common, though less common view. Scottish nationalism isn't nationalism in the sense of right wing nationalism, it's about Scotland having the ability to determine its own future.

I guess where I came from, because of the remoteness of the Highlands and the hardness traditionally though not so much now, you tended to do things differently. You always had supplies of food. My father and mother always had “the winter cupboard.” All these factors that the lowlands with a milder climate didn’t require, and you notice too in that Lowlanders are a little bit more forthcoming than Highlanders, I would say. Also the severe Calvinism of Scots you only get in the Lowlands, you don’t get in the Highlands who are Gaelic people. It’s not in their nature. Calvinism is – that’s a rare form of Presbyterianism, though it does exist in the northwest. There’s a Scottish Highland line, and you get parts of the Lowlands sitting within the Highland line of course.

The other thing is, a Lowland Scot and a Highland Scot are a different breed. Of course Otago is all one settlement, Lowland, whereas Waipu is a Highland settlement, and the difference is obvious, you just have to visit the graveyards. In the north of Scotland a woman always keeps her maiden name, if you go to graveyards you will always see her buried under her maiden name, “wife of etc.” There are only a few Highland settlements I know of in New Zealand, one is Waipu and the other one is in the Manawatu and there was a lot of McKenzies and Frasers settled there. If you look at the two graveyards in those two settlements all the early graves and some of the later ones are all in the Gaelic.

Family, I think in Scotland the tradition of family names is to a large extent gone, because people want to be different, they want to be identified differently, whereas maybe not my generation so much although my names are family ones. I’ve got Fraser on three sides of the family: two on my father’s, one maternal and one paternal. The one I was named after really is the maternal one. My great grandmother was one of thirteen children, the only daughter, and the children were killed in the First World War or only had daughters, so the previous generation from me were all named Fraser. I’ve carried on the tradition, my sister and brother as well. I think the names are so common in some parts of Scotland that you have to be identified by your nickname or your croft or your farm. That’s gone now, but when you come to New Zealand those names, family names become more important, so therefore, far more traditionally in New Zealand people of Scottish and I guess Irish descent give their children much more obvious cultural names

than they would in Scotland perhaps. The amount of Hamishes and Anguses you meet in Canterbury is absolutely unbelievable. I think that's a real fact. Certainly absence makes the heart warm, as the old saying goes, that's definitely true, you want to continue on with that intergenerational connection. All our children have Gaelic names, thankfully my wife agreed, she's a Kiwi of Scottish descent. Our children are Seonaid, Catriona, Taraoesie and **Finlay** Lachlan.

There's a tradition in a lot of families that the first son gets the paternal grandfather's name and the first daughter gets the maternal grandmother's name. But the confusing fact for people in our part of the world is if the paternal grandfather and the maternal grandfather have the same name, then the first and second son have the same name, so the second name would divide them from each other. For those researching family trees this would be an absolute nightmare.

In my other life we are all pipers in our family and continue the piping tradition, and we like to go Scottish country dancing. I took up the pipes in my teens with my neighbour. My parents wanted me to play the fiddle, we had twenty pipers in the family and they thought it might be nice to have a fiddler. But I was hopeless at the fiddle. My fiddle teacher gave up on me.

We go Scottish country dancing as a family, two or three times a year for ceilighs, we just went to the ceiligh at the Hororata Highand Games. Finlay, my son, is a piper, and the girls are interested, they've all been and worked in Scotland, they've participated in Highland games, they celebrate Hogminay and St Andrews Day. We are in a fortunate position that we get to go to Scotland a lot. Having said that, it's part of life, not all of life. Of course people in Scotland are not running round the hills in kilts every moment of the day flinging haggis over their shoulder. But, yeah no, it's funny how it's continued on. It's particularly easy in Canterbury as there are a lot of connections for it.

Culturallly, you've got bands. I think there are eleven pipe bands in Canterbury including two Grade One bands and both have competed at the world championships in Scotland. Apart from that I think there are four or five Scottish Country dancing clubs,



also Scottish Highland dancing, numerous groups, five or six teachers with 80 to 150 pupils each.

In business connections, *Global Scots* is quite active in Christchurch. There's a group of Scots who are interested in Scottish sport, a lot of us met up in Auckland for the Scottish World Cup rugby game. Culturally I thought the Hororata Highland games was very interesting and that went rather well. They have a wee do in Christchurch in January every year at Riccarton Park, for Burns Day, and the Burns Club in Christchurch has over 120 members. Though Christchurch presents itself as an English town the Scots were here first, well, second after the Maori.

There is the possibility of stereotyping in this case, and that is a problem in being a Scot abroad. A comment, you hear about Scots in New Zealand is you're not very Scottish or you're very Scottish. What does that mean? It's a very strange comment, you are what you are, it's not a matter of very or otherwise. For example if you are trying to speak your very best English so you don't have to repeat yourself. I have quite a strong accent, though it doesn't usually happen to me, but I do have other friends who have particularly strong accents, and one of the most frustrating things can be when you go somewhere is to have to repeat yourselves constantly. So most folk modify their accents fairly quickly, so they can be understood, but on occasion there are people who just can't do it, so they try very hard to speak proper English. Therefore their Scottish accent is not considered so strong, but it doesn't make you any less Scottish. We get visitors from Scotland who are of the privately educated Scots who don't have a particularly Scottish accent at all and we have them present whisky things for us and people say "Why did you bring someone over from England?" and we tell them "Well actually they're not from England they're from Scotland." Because they haven't got a Scottish accent, does that not make them Scottish at all? It's very strange. It's probably not strange for the person asking the question, it's strange for us.

The link to Celtic/Gaelic roots is strongly evident in a lot of aspects of Kiwi life. I think the slight conservatism is from that background, but also the ability to have a good time. I think the English are sadly lacking in that respect. Also the hospitality definitely comes from the Celtic roots. The difference is, a friend of mine put it very well, and I've got a lot of English friends too, the English have got a different attitude to hospitality.

An Irish friend of mine once said when he was in London he would talk to people at the bus stop and they would be very reluctant to talk back and he figured out in the end that if they talked to you they felt they had to invite you home for dinner. It's that sort of thing, once you make the connection you have to go further, whereas the Celts as a group are quite happy to make the connection and move on. And I think that's definitely in the New Zealand background. The hospitality here is definitely of the Highland style hospitality. It would be wrong in Scotland ever to refuse hospitality, you would never refuse it regardless of what you thought of the people and I think there's a wee bit of that goes on here. Whereas I know in England, from experience, simply put if you don't enjoy the company of someone and you don't respect them and they turn up at your place you don't invite them over the threshold, whereas in Scotland you'd never refuse someone hospitality.

There are also other not so obvious things going on. I think you can certainly see it in the cooking traditions. I'm amazed at the amount of people who use oats, it was quite a surprise and the fact it is grown and milled here as well. Also potatoes, though they are used around the world, the way they're cooked here, mashed potatoes, we call them bashed potatoes in Scotland, quite common. There are a lot of soups. It really surprised me that a soup in my part of Scotland, called *Cullen Skink*, which I would have thought no one would have known here, but the tradition has come over here. It's made with milk and smoked fish, mash your potato and mix it in, often some chives or other garnish.

It comes through I think too in families, there's wee things go on. I often notice the second or third generation family of Scottish heritage have habits that are very Scottish. We were in the North Island for a wee while and we met a family, none of them were born in Scotland, their parents and grandparents were all from New Zealand, but the family was celebrating Halloween in as traditional a style as they would in Scotland. Halloween is a big celebration in Scotland, and this was before the Americanisation of Halloween came in.

Guisin' was part of the proper Halloween tradition, but it wasn't for money, you had to perform a "turn" which was a song usually, but you might play the pipes if you're at that level at that age. Most people stop guisin' about twelve. We were in a

country district, so you had to get on a bike or walk. The tradition wasn't so much about the children getting something as the children giving something. I'm a rural person so we used to beg at the next farm. You drew up and you'd do a turn and you'd get an apple or an orange or a banana. Then in the Halloween evening you would bob for apples, or you'd have something like an old broom handle between two wardrobes and you'd put a toffee apple or something sticky hangin' from it, the idea was you'd have to jump up to get them, and you'd usually have fruit because in Scotland fruit was quite exotic.

Some of the smaller games, the Highland games, like the Turakina Games in the North Island, have been going for about 150 years and they've kept a lot of very strong small traditions. You've got tossing the caber, throwing the hammer, the running sports such as the hill running and the river running they have here which is very much a Scottish thing. The one I hadn't seen which is new to me was sheaf tossing, which might be an American tradition but certainly I've seen it advertised at games in a lot of countries. The fifty-six pound hammer as well is peculiarly Scottish. So there is quite a few of them.

Of course there are different traditions from different parts of Scotland, ones that I wasn't familiar with. Naming traditions is one that really intrigued me when I first came here. I'll give you an example: former All Black Ant Strachan (pronounced Strawn), you'd see him on TV and you'd hear about him and all that, well in the North of Scotland we would say "Strachan" and I thought that was a New Zealand way of saying things. But I was at a Burns Supper here in Christchurch and there were two women sitting next to each other and they had wee name badges on. I said to them "you're 'Strachans'" and one said "no I'm 'Strawn,' she's a 'Strachan,'" pointing to the other woman, and I said "well how does that work?" She said in South West of Scotland "Strachan" is pronounced "Strawn," so that tradition has gone right through several generations of different parts of Scotland, coming all the way out to New Zealand and staying, instead of being homogenised into one word.

A Burns Supper is a celebration of Robert Burns the national poet of Scotland and his birthday. Although 21<sup>st</sup> of January was the traditional date, though these days they do tend to have them at different times of year in New Zealand, due to the weather

probably. It's quite a formal affair because it's all very much in the same tradition of how you conduct it. There's always a haggis ceremony with a piper, which I always think is particularly peculiar because Robert Burns was a Lowlander, and in his time there would have been a great deal of disrespect for the Highlanders, but he wrote Address to a Haggis, so he was familiar with it. The Highland pipes at a Burns Supper seem very peculiar, this is a Lowland poet and they wouldn't have had any respect for Highland tradition whatsoever. Another thing that makes me laugh at Burns Suppers here and in Scotland is people wearing a kilt, because the Lowlanders never wore a kilt. At the supper you have poetry from Burns, and it is usually divided into presentations by two principal speakers, the Address to the Lassies, the Address to the Laddies and Immortal Memory which is someone who gives a talk, usually somebody of some substance who knows a wee bit about Burns, his life and times and maybe what he would've thought in this modern day. There is usually a meal with it.

I was at a whisky tasting in Blenheim and a guy there named Chris McKay made haggis from a recipe that came out here in 1846 with one of his forebears, exactly the same haggis. I was at Waipu and went to the wee museum there and I saw a wooden *quaich*, a welcoming cup with two handles. The tradition is if you haven't seen someone for a long time or perhaps you have someone new to your home, you may welcome them with a dram in the cup. We have one in the shop. The cup at Waipu which came out here in the 1850s, from Gaelhawke in Scotland, was made about 1815 to the 1820s, and a local wood turner was making an exact replica of it but out of pohutakawa wood. Those sorts of traditions, all sorts of wee things. Pipes too, pipes never wear out, they get refurbished. There are all sorts of people who are refurbishing this and making that. There is a guy making pipe bags in New Zealand and sending them all around the world. There was Donald Gannaway, down in Timaru or Temuka, the business is sold now but the goods are still being manufactured. All these wee things you don't necessarily think of, but they're all things that go on.

In business too, big business as well. Businesses that started off like McKinley's Footwear down in Dunedin. They're very much a Scottish business with that lovely "we won't move off shore" sort of attitude. It's a very Scottish attitude, very *thraughn*, stubborn.

The other thing I thought of was *inglesides*. When I first came here I'd never heard of an ingleside, it a south of Scotland expression, like a wee ceilidh, but a bit different. I remember this woman ringing me up asking if I'd like to come to an ingleside, and I said I would, but I have no idea what it is, and she said to me accusingly "but you're from Scotland" and I said "I am but I still don't know what an Ingleside is." It's interesting how these things go through the generations. Some things they get quite strangely wrong, only in our eyes of course, not their eyes. Sometimes my wife refers to people who she says take it one step too far, as *Scotolocos*.

I can't speak for a lot of folks but I certainly noticed when I came here the absolute parallels between the Scottish Highlands and Maori, tribal people, clan people. Land was everything, I understood that perfectly. I also found it slightly confusing to think that Scots came and colonised them, but also there were exceptions to that like John McKenzie the Minister of Lands in the 1870s who broke up all the stations, to make sure that you couldn't have big land owners like they had in Scotland. Parallels, sadly so.

The first Maori chap I ever met in New Zealand was called Angus Macfarlane, Professor Angus Macfarlane, he is a lecturer in Te Reo. Last year my wife did a year at Canterbury University doing Te Reo studies and we went to a lot of relatively Maori occasions and part of the tradition is they recite their whakapapa. You'd often get a Scottish or Irish connection coming through; they'd relate back to County Kerry or Ballindalloch, you could hear it coming through in the language. So yes I think there was a lot of intermarriage. Even now, a friend of mine emigrated from Scotland about 40 years ago, all his five children were born in Scotland and four of them have married Pacific Island or Maori girls.

## ***Speaking Gaelic***

### **Evelyn Entwhistle, Scots Gaelic teacher**

*The fiddle tune “The First Lady Chief” written by Bob Entwhistle commemorates the Gaelic Society in Dunedin putting aside more than a century of male domination in 1986 and electing his wife, Evelyn Entwhistle, as its Chief. Evelyn and Bob Entwhistle were involved with the Gaelic Society, as treasurer and secretary and were both Chiefs of the society. Evelyn wrote “A History of 100 years of the Gaelic Society, 1881-1981,” which records the people who belonged to the society and its varied functions. These included nurturing cultural traditions of music and song and visiting the sick and the elderly. Evelyn, who has a Highland background, taught the Gaelic Choir for many years. Bob still plays the fiddle and tin whistle and Evelyn the harp. Until Christmas 2010 Evelyn taught folk dancing. Interest in the Gaelic language prompted Evelyn to attend a Gaelic school in Stornoway on the island of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides in the 1970s. She taught Scots Gaelic classes in Dunedin for some years and at the time of the interview still had private pupils.*

I think it’s very important to know the language of the country. I think it’s very important to know a second language because it gives you another way of looking at things which you don’t have if you only know the one language. I have a bit of Scottish Gaelic which I didn’t get from my parents at all.

I was born in Glasgow and I lived outside of Glasgow until I was 21, so I can claim Scottish descent. My mother and father both sang and played instruments but they didn’t sing songs in Gaelic and they had no interest in Gaelic culture. Dad played a mandolin and a banjo and sang mostly Scottish but not Gaelic songs. I recall him singing a Scottish folk song “On the Banks of Allen Water” most soulfully. Mum was a good pianist and encouraged me to try piano lessons. I came to New Zealand with my husband Bob who got a job in the Physics Department at Otago University in 1961 and I got a job at the university too, on spec, teaching textile chemistry. We just decided to stay here. We were both on approval originally.

I got the Gaelic from a gentleman called Angus MacIvor here in Dunedin who is now dead. I used to go up to his house every week and have a Gaelic lesson and I ended up teaching Gaelic to the Gaelic choir. He was intent on getting me installed to lead the Gaelic choir in Dunedin which I did for many years, over twenty years. When people were learning the Gaelic songs they had to learn a wee bit of the language first. It was quite an imposition on them to learn enough of the Gaelic to be able to sing in the choir, so I was quite impressed with their perseverance. Singing songs is a very good way to learn because you get a flow.

The Gaelic Society which celebrated its one hundredth anniversary in 1981 died three or four years ago after lasting 125 years. We reached a stage when my husband and I were doing most of the work involved and there were no young folks coming along so it was obviously time to shut up shop. The choir hasn't continued either. There are not many outlets for our singing except for the folk club. Since then I haven't done a lot of teaching Gaelic because the classes decreased and diminished over the years. But my husband Bob and I both still sing Gaelic songs from the Gaelic Choir which I got my husband into eventually. We are still very fond of Gaelic music and songs and this probably originated from the Gaelic choir.

I taught Gaelic for between three and five years all told. I think it was after I retired from Otago University, I took courage in both hands and taught Gaelic at Logan Park High School, the polytechnic and teachers' training college. It was initially very popular, it hasn't been so popular recently, I don't quite know why.

I've had one student this year Linda Harvey who is a student of history, she's a school teacher retired and she's been an excellent pupil because she knows the difference between an adverb and an adjective and between present tense and past tense. I used to spend a lot of time trying to explain to students the difference between adjectives and adverbs. She's over in Scotland just now and she's got orders to send me a postcard written in Gaelic, posted from Scotland. I've enjoyed her immensely.

There are subtleties in the Gaelic and I'm still learning about it. For many years I was reading about the beautiful "blue" grass and it was actually "green." In Scottish "two" is considered to be a single unit, and three is a plural, for example "one hen,"

“two hen” and “three hens.” My accent is still apparent. The other day I was talking about a “quarry” with a friend and she didn’t understand “quarry” I had to spell it and I felt a real heel.

When I retired from teaching textile chemistry at the university I found I missed teaching. I took the job on at the university not having taught at all before and being uncertain whether I would enjoy teaching or not. And I found to my surprise and relief that I enjoyed teaching, so after I retired I was inveigled into teaching folk dancing. Folk dancing probably came out of my interest in Scottish Gaelic I suspect. I still teach folk dancing which I did this morning. It probably has influenced my choice of tunes, I do like a good tune for a dance. I do have Scottish dances, not very many perhaps. Today we did dances from Romania and Denmark, so we do a lot of different national dances.

There are about 15 to 20 people and most have come through word of mouth which is very good. They seem to know I expect people to know their left foot from their right foot and this is a big help if you can do that. I’ve never advertised at all and the class has grown from about three or four up to about twenty and that’s quite enough for me to cope with. I see dance and singing as a part of music. I do not understand people who have no sense of rhythm. I find it’s usually men have poor co-ordination, women on the whole are much better co-ordinated, I don’t know why this is.

I still enjoy teaching dancing although I find it increasingly hard work, I am now eighty. Last night I spent twenty minutes trying to understand the instructions, instructions for dances are very difficult to write down clearly and I had two sets of instructions for a particular dance which didn’t agree. Anyway I tried it out again today and I rather laboured it, but they got it right at the end. Most of the people in my class are about 60 or 70 or even perhaps 80 and most of them have had hip replacements or knee replacement. One soul had both knees replaced at the same time – can you imagine the pain? A very cheerful sort of person who has recovered well. So they are limited physically, but mentally they enjoy a challenge, and they enjoy the challenge of formation dancing, having to be at a certain place at a certain time according to the music, so it’s very much music oriented.



My feelings about my Scottish background have changed over time, but I can't think of any particular factors that have done this. I've been back to Scotland seven times. When I went back to Scotland, I found it rather appalling because of the class distinction. This was rural Scotland outside of Glasgow. It was an area where folks still doffed their caps to the laird and this was a thing I didn't strike at all here, which was good. After we'd been here for several years I realised that one of my best friends was a house painter. Now if I had stayed in Scotland I would never ever have known a house painter. I knew doctors and dentists and lawyers but very few other folks did come up to the standard of my parents.

There are a lot of pipe bands in New Zealand. And I'm at present practicing a song on my harp which has a flattened seventh on it, similar to the bagpipe scale. I play the harp and I sing. We play music with a friend who plays the bagpipes and there only is a flattened seventh, there is no G sharp.

At university here they have recently appointed chairs in Scottish Studies and Irish Studies, these people do not have the language, they do not sing or dance or play the harp and I am appalled at this because I do believe that knowledge of the language is very basic to understanding the culture. How they can lecture on culture and not know any of the language I do not know, it is quite beyond me.

Michael Godfrey, Scots Gaelic teacher

*Michael learned Scots Gaelic in the early 1990s in Christchurch and taught it for several years. He explains how he came to learn it:*

A very nice lady asked me if I had been to the Te Maori exhibition. I said that I hadn't. She then asked, "Have you ever thought of learning Maori?" and I said "No." Not meaning to be rude, she then said "I suppose we Maori shouldn't be arrogant because you Pakehas have got no culture." I just started spinning a lot of stuff about having a Scottish background, which she thought was great, she thought I came from an incredibly rich culture. And I said to her, "Anyhow I'm learning Scottish Gaelic," which was a complete lie, but it put the idea in my head. So I have her to thank for it. Then I saw an ad in the paper for classes, so I went along. It was more pigheadedness, opposing someone, proving them wrong, even though they are right, and yes, there may be certain cultural traits showing themselves already.

My teacher, Donald McLeod from the Outer Hebrides, was a very interesting bloke. When I went to lessons initially it was done by one of his pupils, who wasn't a native speaker. For a year, he basically went through the *Teach Yourself Gaelic* book. In it Donald asked, "Would you like to try to write letters to me in Gaelic and I'll correct them?" so I did. I eventually got to meet him. We did correspondence for about three and a half years, but I couldn't go to the classes after a year for some reason so he got me to go to his place. I went to his place in Belfast, in north Christchurch once a week for three years. His way of teaching was just to talk to you, and to have you on at the same time, so I didn't only have to work out what he saying but also whether he was serious or not.

He was from Harris, in the islands. He left when he was about sixteen or seventeen and had to get a job so joined the British Army. He was born in 1915, I think they all spoke Gaelic then, though they had to learn English at school and they had to speak English at school. It was the full culture, fishermen and small crofters, and where he came from the Church of Scotland ruled with an iron fist. The two southern islands were Catholic, the rest were staunch Free Church, no radio or television. I learned a lot

about that. That culture was of the early 1920s, but it could have been from the 1820s and it's completely different now.

I started taking classes in the early nineties. He got me to start classes. Well he died, so I ran them for about ten years. We got a whole range of people, some quite young, to people in their seventies. One of the blokes, old Bernard, was of an Irish background, there was no-one teaching Irish Gaelic so he came because he was interested. A significant proportion were from a Scots background. You got the odd person, who studied languages – sometimes people get a bit attracted to Celtic romance, which is fair enough but the reality is a bit different. There was a sort of reaction against the Maori renaissance. There's almost a bolshie streak in the Scots nature, you can't tell me I have to learn Maori, I'm Scots – but that got them interested.

We used *Teach Yourself Gaelic* and there were other resources around, because there was a bit of a renaissance of it in Scotland at the time. I basically wrote the first two years of the course as a more simplified version of what was in the book. It went quickly, so I slowed it down. The problem with Gaelic is the natives speak it amongst themselves. This comes from its persecution really, where they closed ranks, so it's a language that you speak to your family, but as soon as someone speaks English they flip to English. They see it as rude to talk Gaelic, so if you've learned it, it's very hard to get the native speakers to actually speak it to you because you're an outsider. I was lucky the bloke who taught me wasn't like that.

Probably about once every five years I bump into a native speaker or a fluent speaker and I have a day or so of intense brain work as I try to get up to speed, then I don't see them for another five years. Generally it's people visiting, the Scots coming over, for some cultural reasons, I hear about it, or someone will let me know. In terms of a native speaker community, yes there's few out there, but it's really hard to get them to engage, it's not the way they were raised. The young mightn't be quite so much like that.

The one thing I learned is that language is part of the culture. It sounds a cliché, but the way they express things is different from English. They have a word *cianalas*, the term they used when they were exiled, when they went to Canada, or where ever.

There's nothing in English that has that effect, it's a really sad word. Their word for argument is "argument" the English word, from cultural assimilation. Their concept of arguing is not quite the same as it would be in English. It's not seen as anti-social.

The way Gaelic is structured makes it almost impossible to be pompous. In some ways it seems long-winded, but it's such a precise language, and so structured that you have to be very direct in the way that you express something or else it comes across as confused. It doesn't come across as blunt though, yet if you said it that way in English it would sound slightly rude. That's got a lot to do with the culture, where they differ from the English – not that I'm criticising the English. The Scots are really against arrogance and pomposity, in fact they take the mickey out of each other. When I learnt Gaelic, that happened to me all the time, it's the way.

Someone who's bad tempered wouldn't bother them as much as someone who was full of themselves. If someone exploded or erupted in violent argument they would let that one pass. Also by the same token, if you're arguing with someone or disagreeing with a point they make, they make a big thing of indicating it's the argument and not the person, more so than in English. They would almost apologetically do it. They'd use a term meaning the "Right" or "Honourable" such and such. They don't mean it as you would in a court, it's a way of saying, "you're a decent person, but I think you're wrong." They're careful about not offending each other because they are so quick off the mark. My teacher was one of the most intelligent people I've ever met in my life.

Quite a lot of people came to the classes, but it was quite hard, most of them didn't get anywhere near advanced or if they were in a room with a native speaker, being able to talk to them. There was Jim Hamilton, there'd be two or three. I probably did it in classes for about eight years, and about twenty started each year, so I'd say about 150 went through but most didn't stick it.

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My mother's parents came from Edinburgh and my auntie was born there. My grandfather's family, the Daggers, was a mix of Lowland Scots and Irish with French origins and my grandmother's family was from near Inverness, MacIntosh, Stewart and Weir. I was born in Christchurch. My wife is from a Scots family, though I didn't know

that when I started going out with her. It wasn't a conscious part of the decision, but goodness knows at what genetic level decisions are made.

My grandfather, came out here just before the First World War, then went away to Gallipoli, got stuffed, and ended up marrying my grandmother in the British Isles. When he returned from Gallipoli, he came back with a wife, a child, and no work. The book *War Brides* records their story, my granny's picture is on the cover. He just did odd jobs in the Depression, and finally got a job building displays for the Otago Museum. He left school when he was twelve, he had to, so he would teach himself about each display that he had to build. He'd learn about butterflies, and learn about nature that way. That's another thing that used to be very strong with the Scots, self-education. I've found he gave me a book done by Auckland Museum, a summary of New Zealand animals and insects that got me interested in nature.

They lived in Dunedin but they used to come up and visit Christchurch. I was interested in music and my grandfather used to encourage me as a teenager, but I think he would have encouraged anything. He was just positive. My interest in music was encouraged by both my Scots grandparents though regarded as impractical by the rest of the family.

My Scottish grandparents were much different from my Kiwi ones. This may have been social class as well as culture. The main differences I would say were: there was a tight extended family with a female matriarch, this was understood but never spelt out. When my grandmother died her eldest daughter took over the role. My grandfather liked to argue politics and religion unlike the English side. He was also strong on self-education throughout his life, having never been to secondary school. This seems to be a pattern among working class Scots males of his generation. Food – there were lots of soups and porridge for breakfast. Religion – Presbyterian but my grandfather because of his experiences at Gallipoli was not a believer. Music – my grandfather liked Irish music. My normally shy and reserved grandmother would become quite vocal at dances. I remember loving the bagpipes from an early age.

Family ties are strong, especially at the time of a death. Generally when someone dies, all the cousins come, less so on the Kiwi side. Anne's family has cousins too –

there's basically a sense of belonging to a group of cousins. On the Scots side, I know all my cousins and we see them from time to time, while on the other side of the family, I haven't met some for decades and I wouldn't know them if I saw them. With the Scots system it seems to be grandmother based, and Anne's family is the same.

*Anne:* The women live longer, that's why. My granny died at 103, Michael's died at 100. My parents didn't come out to Christchurch till 1952, so I was the first born here.

*Michael:* In your mother's generation, it was like the Maori, if someone couldn't look after a kid they would go to another part of the family. She basically fostered two.

*Anne:* I was bought up with the stories of these relatives. I didn't know whether they were first, second, third, fourth or fifth cousin, I just knew that they were family. They lived with my mother, they were taken in.

*Michael:* There was the odd baby who wasn't born in wedlock, but the kids always got raised by someone.

*Anne:* Granny even went from Glasgow to the north of Scotland to visit, which in those days would've been a huge journey. They had to walk a mile to get a pail of water. I was bought up with all the stories of life in the close, in a Glasgow tenement.

*Michael:* There is a story about the Catholic neighbours who had to get rid of an orange cat because it was the wrong colour. They didn't though to their credit.

*Anne:* And the woman who had an argument with her husband. She sent him packing and threw all his belongings down to the second floor, including an iron frying pan, which could've killed him if it had fallen on him. There was a lot of talk of hand to mouth and the corner shop. The good suit got cleaned every Monday and bought out every Sunday. Mind you my father was Catholic, though not practicing.

*Micheal:* Her sister was raised in Barrow, in the Islands, for some reason.

*Anne:* You never got a clear picture of relationships.

*Michael:* It's very Celtic. Instead of unravelling the strings they tie themselves up more and more. Something that might be typically Celtic, applying to the culture, the

old bloke that I learned from wrote stories about life in the islands. He'd write plays and weave in everything. So the play may be set at a meeting somewhere in the Islands but he'd weave in Michael Jackson and Lady Di would be making the sandwiches out the back. Everything that was happening got woven in. It's not about saying anything that's stunningly deep but it's about making a very interesting pattern with what you've got at hand.

I don't think my attitude to Scottish culture has changed over time, but learning Gaelic made me see what was already there. It was always there even if I didn't see it when younger. I think our reserve is due to the Presbyterianism of the Scots. I also think our aversion to arrogance and elitism and our egalitarianism comes from the Scots and the Australians. In the Aussies it kind of comes from the convict experience principally, because the only person you could trust was the fellow next to you. You certainly couldn't trust the authority, they were the bad guys. There were a lot of Irish in Aussie in the formative years. I think the Aussies came over here when we needed labour and counteracted any attempts to impose a too English way of doing things.

I think Presbyterianism is part of the difference between the Irish and the Scots. It did change the Scots, they are quite reserved and I think we are. New Zealanders mostly suck it in. We tend not to criticise people and governments. The English probably do that more than we would. Culturally, New Zealanders aren't as blunt as more Germanic cultures. This is very Scottish. It's definitely a cultural thing. I know with the Highland Scots if there's something annoying them they won't say, you have to work it and if you don't work it out you certainly find out that you've missed it. They will if you're really lucky give you the vaguest hint. Once you raise it, it's fine and it's all discussed. Whereas cultures like the Dutch and the British are more direct. They would find that really rude. They're really ultra-sensitive to people's body language.

I found that with English immigrants, they would come across as very bossy. I found just working with them, whether you're a labourer, or whatever. A lot would be done without anyone spelling out what you'd do. People would just sort of combine and do a job, whereas with the English, someone would say, "You do this and you do that." I see parallels with the Scots very much in that. But New Zealand culture is changing. When I was young, it was terrible to be considered "a skite" now it's selling yourself

and is expected, so culture changes. I think traditional New Zealand society has become fairly Americanised over the last twenty or thirty years.

*Anne:* In the late 1990s I worked with a Scottish woman straight from Scotland, we clicked. Culturally we weren't that dissimilar, even to the extent when I met her brother I had a bit of a flash back. I was bought up with these slightly stropky males and I was just transported from the 1990s back to the 1950s or 1960s in an instant, just in the recognition of the way he was talking.

*Michael:* My Scots grandfather was like that. I like them very much, but the blokes are stropky. "Why are ya doin that?" And then they wink at you.

*Anne:* In between time I'd forgotten that squeaky door, constant moaning. It was like a step back in time. I thought "Thank God my parents came to New Zealand and I married a Kiwi. I don't have to listen to that whingey critical stirring." The men are verbally dominant, but they don't run the show. My mother handled the finances, she did everything.

*Michael:* It is a matriarchal society underneath. That's how it was with your granny. If there was a family occasion they'd trundle her in, in a wheelchair and that set the thing up.

*Anne:* She was the head of the household.

*Michael:* Whereas it's not like that on the Kiwi side or in an English way, you wouldn't call them matriarchal.

*Michael:* Something I learned with the Gaelic, religious difference were massive. Donald, who I learned Gaelic from, said he hated the Free Church of Scotland because they stifled their initiative. It was so critical and negative. But if there was someone from the Catholic parts of the islands and he met them, they would immediately piss each other off without even opening their mouths, because they were harangued by their ministers. That's something that it is good that's gone, talking about culture changing. And in Glasgow as well where your mother came from.



*Anne:* Where I was raised you don't marry a *Pape*. Although my mother married a pape, a Catholic, then the family all went on to marry Catholics.

*Michael:* Even our son married a Catholic. They're Maori Catholics so it's getting all mixed up. Was it at your auntie or uncle's funeral, there was a bit of a family scrap? I head Anne's auntie say to the other auntie "it doesn't seem worth pursuing it here, but if it had happened in the old country...." Meaning that in New Zealand the old bitternesses just didn't seem worth the effort.

*Anne:* It is interesting when you are bought up in an immigrant family, probably you hold on to the old ways, even more vehemently than in the normal course of events in the homeland. We had fish on Fridays. My father never went back to Scotland. I know there was a whole heap of stuff that was never elucidated, that was going on around him and his family. As soon as dad died Mum was off like a shot and she went back many times. I was bought up in a multicultural family: My mother married a Scotsman, my aunty was married to an Irishman, Uncle Bob, and my other Aunty, Aunty Betty was married to an Australian.

*Michael:* It is important to distinguish between Celtic culture and Scottish culture. Gaelic culture exists (or existed) in the Highlands and islands off Scotland and is quite distinct from Lowland culture. It is an Irish culture but with the domination of the Calvinistic Free Church rather than the Catholic Church. The distinction from Lowland culture is further complicated by the fact that many Lowlanders, my wife's family for example, are of a Highland background required to move to Glasgow or Edinburgh for economic reasons, and later to New Zealand and then Australia.

Gaelic-speaking Scots and Irish use the word *Gael* to mean themselves, their culture. The Gaeltacht is the area they lived in, which is the Highlands of Scotland or the west coast of Ireland. In fact there is not much cultural difference between the Scottish Gaelic speakers and the Irish ones. I remember Donald said once that Gaelic is the language of intelligent Irishmen. That's how he saw his culture and he was from Harris, Protestant Free Church of Scotland. Historically it's an Irish culture, they went backwards and forwards. Glencoe and the MacDonalds got kicked out so they sent them to Ireland for a hundred years and they raised their kids to be bitter about the

Campbells, then went back and massacred them. They went back and forwards. That's up till three or four hundred years ago. They wouldn't see themselves as that much different. We're talking about Gaelic speakers, rather than English speakers who would see themselves as different anyway.

"Scottish culture" is a bit like saying "New Zealand culture." You could ask what do you mean? Maori, Chinese? The Scots, the Gaelic-speaking Scots were just one part. Traditionally they came over about 700 AD, though there were Picts there long before then. There were what you might call Welsh Britons there long before then, Germans came, the Saxons and Angles. There's quite a variation in Scottish culture: Lowland Scots regard Highland Scots as quite different, even though they probably descended from them. *Chuktah* is the term they'd use for a Highlander.

*Anne:* My Grandmother was a Gaelic speaker, but they'd moved to the Lowlands to the city, something like a Maori raised in the city rather than on the marae.

*Michael:* Scots Gaelic speakers actively discouraged their children from speaking it. There were a lot of negative educational forces disparaging their language. It's very like what happened with Maori, they got told they were retarded. Also they saw it as an impediment to their children's future. The Education Act of 1872 meant that when the children were educated they had to be educated in English. Old Donald said he got beaten if he spoke Gaelic in the playground in the Islands, even though they used it once they got out of the school gates. That's the nature of cultures dominating other cultures.

I've heard older white blokes say they heard Maori at school, from Gisborne and around there, so they learned it because they were from largely Maori areas. In the 1930s, I think, that's when they insisted on English "for their own good." Our grandchildren are Maori, our granddaughter is in an immersion primary school up North, and I encourage them.

I do some work at the university and deal with people from a lot of different cultures. Because I have learned Gaelic it makes a massive difference in how I communicate. You know what the problem is with a language that is not your own. An ordinary Kiwi would repeat the same thing louder about five times.

I don't think the Scottish and Irish experience of colonisation influenced how they related to Maori. That's an historical question. McKenzie who broke up the big estates had witnessed the clearances in Scotland. He was bitter about it so the first thing he tried to do when he came here was to get rid of the big English estates, which he did break up, but he quite happily stole land off the Maoris. So in my experience it doesn't seem to translate to other cultures. And I'm sure there were a lot of Irish in Australia, or Scots who gave the Aborigines a pretty rough time, I'm quite cynical about that.

But I think there are more cultural similarities between the Scots and the Maoris than probably between the English and the Maori, especially with regard to the extended family. I think this is why there were more Scots/Maori marriages, including in my own family, as evidenced by the number of Maoris with Scots names, like Morrison, MacDonald, and Mair. But, sadly, I don't think the Scots treatment of Maori has been any better than the English, in spite of the Clearances. It is a sad fact of history that yesterday's oppressed become today's oppressors. One only has to look to Israel. So my answer would be "no."

There were more cultural similarities probably between the Scots and the Irish and the Maori. Having said that the canoe in the Otago Museum, according to my grandfather, was done by an English man, he married a Maori lady, learned their carving and did the canoe.

## ***Performing Arts: Music and Singing***

### **Marianne Hepple, Uilleann pipe player**

*On Aucklander Marianne Hepple's Facebook page there's a photo of her with her Uilleann pipes taken on Okahu Bay Beach, in Auckland, on 1 January 2000, after playing for the Millennium ceremony. She played a slow air surrounded by about 15,000 people, while the specially built Irish curragh came in to shore behind the Maori waka.*

I came to the pipes, as most of my life's enterprises, from a serious musical and cultural point of view. You have to respect and understand the culture to be a "proper" piper, and immerse yourself in it. I did have a few months with a hired set of Northumbrian pipes – the surname Hepple is particularly associated with the Northumbrian pipes- but felt they were less expressive. The Northumbrian piping repertoire is a combination of English, Borders and Scottish, with a bit of Irish, as a lot of Irish settled in the northeast of England. It should be noted that in the nineteenth century, Uilleann pipes, although played at all levels of society, were more often played by members of the Anglo-Irish gentry due to the cost of obtaining an instrument. They have never been cheap. Mainly men too of course, but I have seen photos from the early 1900's of lady pipers looking very genteel in their long frilly Edwardian frocks.

I belonged to the Auckland Irish Society for a number of years and was also a member of the New Zealand Uilleann Pipers Association, Na Piobairi Uilleann in Dublin, and subscribed for many years to *Irish Music* magazine.

I started to learn Irish Gaelic at Continuing Education at Auckland University in 1993. Once this course had finished, the class carried on at the Auckland Irish Society clubrooms on Great North Rd, Grey Lynn. Our teacher Tony Brennan was from Belfast and very experienced. I am not by nature a sociable type, but I made many friends in this class – we shared musical and literary, as well as linguistic, interests. I believe that having an understanding, even if not as a fluent speaker, of any language is central to understanding the culture – the rhythms and thought patterns – and for the music in particular. Slow airs played on the Uilleann pipes usually derive from songs in Gaelic,

so to get the phrasing it is helpful to know and understand the words. The sound of the spoken language carries through into the form and phrasing of the music.

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As a first-generation Kiwi, I like to think of myself as Anglo-Norman-Irish-Scottish-Northumbrian, certainly part of the Anglo-Celtic diaspora – a melting pot of Northern European ancestry, including ultimately Nordic/Germanic and the wider Celtic genetic lineage, rather than specifically Gaelic. I have always felt annoyed at the frequent “denial” or “dismissal” by some of the tangata whenua that we Pakeha (mainly Anglo-Celts) have any cultural heritage or deep roots. I can trace my whakapapa back around 800 years on my father’s side.

My paternal grandmother Patsy (Patricia) L’Estrange was the daughter of Edgar Francis Quinlan L’Estrange (EFQL). My great grandfather, born in Dublin in 1872, a lieutenant-colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corps, was the last in my direct family line to be born in what is now the Republic of Ireland. EFQL was the son of Edgar William L’Estrange, born in Dublin 1826, Solicitor General for Ireland, my great great grandfather, and Francis Mary Henderson, daughter of John Henderson and Maria Clavelles of Dublin. Although Ireland was then still part of the United Kingdom, EFQL certainly identified as Irish. No one would deny George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde or W B Yeats their Irishness, though they were undoubtedly Anglo-Irish – Yeats contributed much to the Gaelic revival at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Is there guilt about being part of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy? The comedian/TV personality Graeme Norton is a good contemporary example of someone who is Anglo-Irish by descent, but thought of as “Irish” though not from the ascendancy/gentry

The earliest L’Estrange in my direct line with an Irish connection was Sir Nicholas Le Strange, who died in 1580. He came from Hunstanton, Norfolk, England to Athleague, County Roscommon, in the sixteenth century. His son Richard was born in Athleague and marks the start of the Irish-born line, which lasted for more than 300 years. The L’Estranges were Anglo-Normans, probably having arrived from France with William the Conqueror – remember also that the Normans were originally Vikings. They were certainly established in Norfolk by the twelfth century. The Elizabethan-era

L'Estranges arrived in Ireland to manage the estate and manor at Lynn in Co. Westmeath. Nicholas L'Estrange was knighted by Queen Elizabeth I, so it has to be assumed that he adopted Protestantism after Henry VIII's Reformation. Before then, everyone had been Catholic by default.

My great-great-great-great grandfather Francis L'Estrange was born in 1756, Auburn, County Westmeath and was a physician and surgeon, Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons, in Dublin. He was the accoucheur, or male midwife, at the birth in 1779 of Thomas Moore, of Moore's Irish Melodies fame. There are still other descendants of Francis L'Estrange living in Dublin and surroundings, whom my parents have visited. However, most other L'Estrange descendants immigrated to the US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa.

Patsy L'Estrange, my father's grandmother, married Robert Alexander Hepple, born in Ballymena, County Antrim, which is incidentally Liam Neeson's home town, in what is now Northern Ireland, in the late nineteenth century. It is my paternal grandfather, RAH, who entitles me to apply for an Irish passport, if I could afford it, as at the time all of Ireland was part of the United Kingdom and so no distinction is made. At the height of the Celtic Tiger boom, it was very cool to have an Irish passport. RAH, like Patsy's father EFQL, was a doctor in the Royal Army Medical Corps, having been born the son of a Northumbrian tailor who had moved to Ulster via Scotland for work. RAH certainly went up in the world.

There are Scottish connections on Dad's side: Janet Noble from Peebleshire; and the Hendersons in Ireland. Despite being born a Watson, Mum has been unable to trace any Scottish ancestry.

I was born in Auckland in 1963 to English-born immigrants, so I am a first generation Kiwi.

My parents met at Scottish country dancing in Waterview, Auckland around 1961. Dad had been doing it for some time due to his Scottish ancestry, while Mum on the other hand had been looking for "English" country dancing, but as there was no such thing in Auckland, she settled for Scottish. They had a Highland piper play at their wedding. Dad used to wear a kilt in the Henderson tartan. My siblings and I were taken

to Scottish country dancing evenings, at Waterview and at New Lynn social club hall, during childhood. My sisters and I wore our little Buchanan tartan kilts, erroneously it now seems, based on my mother's supposed Scottish Watson ancestors. My father listened to a lot of Scottish country dancing records, such as Andy Stewart. He also had an LP by the Chieftains and an EP of Northumbrian piping. At that time I did not have an interest in Irish trad/folk music – in fact I grew up playing German folk songs on the piano from a book my mother had won as a prize for German language at school.

My parents currently belong to the Waikato Irish Society, as they now live in Hamilton, and have made several trips to Ireland, looking into family history. My parents' "Celtic" musical interests have always been rather middle of the road/easy listening – Foster and Allen, Daniel O'Donnell – whereas mine are more the "pure drop," the real traditional music. My sister did Highland dancing and Irish step dancing when young, among other dance styles – she also did jazz, tap and ballet – but it wasn't really a cultural identification thing as far as I understand.

On the surface, it would appear that I came to Irish traditional and folk music independently of any of this, though it may have seeped into my subconscious. As a child, learning classical music, I probably looked down my nose at "folk music" in truth. When I took up the challenge of teaching myself the Uilleann pipes in 1994, inspired in particular by the playing of Liam O'Flynn of the group Planxty, I hadn't played a musical instrument seriously since high school. I had notoriously been a dabbler in piano, classical and pop guitar, recorder and clarinet through my childhood and teenage years – getting quite good but never "mastering" anything. I was determined to master the pipes. My Irish musical interests gave me something in common with my father which I had not had before.

I also equated Irishness with rebelliousness. I was in particular rebelling against the snobbery-ridden world of classical music, since I was working for the Auckland Philharmonia when I became a "folkie." But ultimately, the pipes represented a challenge – which I needed – and an opportunity to express myself musically, something which had been missing from my life for a number of years. The Uilleann pipes are very much an individualist's instrument, unlike the Highland pipes and their band culture.

Obviously, the Celtic connection has had a major influence on my interests and hobbies – music in particular, but also literature and movies. I went through the height of my “Celtic mania” during the 1990s – Celtic Tiger and Riverdance meant that more people were interested in what I was doing too – for a number of psychological and emotional reasons. It took over my life for a number of years. I went through a phase of wearing Celtic pendants and rings, but it is all now part of the general background to my life and cultural interests. I have always said that I would play the pipes at Dad’s funeral.

I am less attached to specifically Irish culture these days and my musical interests have broadened and changed as I explored the wider European folk legacy – in particularly Scandinavian via Shetland. I am a “lapsed” piper primarily because I have been co-habiting with a cat – now onto my second – since the end of 2002. The pipes are not feline-friendly, I don’t have a soundproof room to practice in and I love my cat so can’t subject him to loud wailing, no matter how musical. Breast cancer turned my life upside down in 2000 – 2001, which is a long story though it didn’t in itself stop me playing the pipes.

As religion is such an important of Irish culture, I have to mention that I was baptised into the Anglican church, but have in fact been an atheist since childhood. Mainly due to finances, I have never visited Ireland – my sister has – or Scotland, though have had two stays in England in 1979 and 1981-2.

My impression is that the Kiwi character, not just in the Gaelic stronghold of Otago, has certainly been most strongly influenced by its Scottish heritage. The Protestant work ethic, hardiness in pioneer days and a propensity for prolific consumption of alcohol. It has certainly been more visible than Irish, given that pipe bands and solo Highland pipers are always called on for parades and special occasions. In my opinion, however, the English respect for authority has dominated over the Celtic hatred of it, which has meant that Kiwis are rather reluctant to stand up and be counted. Irish culture, certainly before the Celtic Tiger/Riverdance mania of the mid to late 1990s, was far less visible and indeed insular. My understanding however is that Irish culture was more visible in New Zealand’s early history, than in the mid to late twentieth century.



Certainly, the Scots and Irish who had come from oppressed backgrounds in their homelands readily identified with Maori including loss of indigenous language, and intermarried with the tangata whenua. The Irish would have identified with the more laid back Maori approach to life. It is well known that many prominent Maori including activists such as Ken Mair have as much Celtic as Maori ancestry. The Protestants from Northern Ireland – Ulster Scots in reality – may have had a different attitude – though in fact life at home was not necessarily easy for them either. Maori like the Irish have strong family ties and attach great value to whakapapa, Maori identify with an iwi, and the Irish with their county or town, a Kerry man, or a Wicklow man.

## Evey McAuliffe, singer

*Evey McAuliffe has been in an all-woman band, Cairde, translated as “friends,” for over twenty years and has taught the other women songs in Irish and explained their historical significance. Some of her favourites are “Na Seacht Suailce an Mhaighdean Bheannathe,” “Gabhaim Molta Bride,” “Irish Ways and Irish Laws,” and “My Own Dear Native Land.” They’ve made four recordings and performed at arts festivals. A delegation from Nelson to Wellington, to launch the first guide to the arts in Nelson, when Jim Bolger was Prime Minister, decided the best present to give him was a Cairde CD, no pottery or paintings, just a CD of Irish New Zealand music.*

*Born in Dublin, to Irish parents, Evey McAuliffe was the youngest of six children. They were comfortably off, with her father a pharmacist and her mother an artist, who was trained at Dublin College of Art, as well as being a writer and a musician. The family culture dictated that everyone should have “a party piece” and be able to perform and contribute to social gatherings. She lived in Canada for three years and travelled around Asia for about two years before she came to New Zealand in 1986, aged 33, and stayed. With no long term plan, she met and fell in love with musician Bob Bickerton and moved from Dunedin to Nelson.*

I do think that when one is taken out of one’s culture it makes you consider cultural identity. Nobody likes being confused with another culture. Nothing gets up my nose more than having someone refer to me as British, or from the British Isles. I’ve always been involved in Irish culture in music and song and dance and when you travel to another country those are the things that identify you as different. My close friends are other Irish women because we share that heritage, that sense of humour, we enjoy the *craic* together. A very close friend is third-generation Irish who has lived in Ireland for a few years, she gets the Irish sense of humour. I have another good friend who is about fourth generation, Catherine Brosnahan. I just feel connected to those women and I think it’s the cultural connection really. It runs deep.

A few of us tried for a while to keep the language going. We used to meet on a regular basis with some other people to speak Irish and to up-skill ourselves in the language. In that group initially were two New Zealanders of Irish extraction who

wanted to learn the language, but it was pretty daunting. One of those guys had never ever learned another language so I'm afraid he just didn't have the skills to do it, but the other chap had learnt Spanish and Maori and he was very good. But then I got full-time work and we sort of stopped meeting on a regular basis. When I see those guys we exchange a few words in Irish, or if one of them rings up I always know who it is. It's really hard to keep that a living thing. Life is very full with other things, so it is not a priority. My connection with the Irish language now is through learning songs in Irish. Some I particularly like are "Mo Ghile Mear," "Anach Cuain," "Fill a Run," "Gabhaim Molta Bride Teir Abhaile Riu," "Molly na gCuach Ni Chuilleanain," "Bruach na Carraige Baine," "Siul a Run," "Ta mo chleamhnas a Dheanamh," "An Mhaighdean Mhara."

I think Irish people fully understand the importance of language. There is that Irish phrase which is so apt, "Tir gan teanga, tir gan chroi" – "A land without a language is a land without a heart." Language is who we are. I think that is a sad thing for me but it was a necessary thing when I stopped using the idioms I used to use, because I was sick of explaining myself to people who wanted to understand what I'd said. I didn't want to be a source of curiosity. I wanted to be able to express myself without being interrupted. I find now when my friends and family come out to visit me Bob says I completely go back into it again. He always knows when I pick up the phone that there is an Irish person on the other end of the phone, by how I'm speaking. It's a bit sad to lose that. Sometimes I'm in my local supermarket and I will hear Iarla O'Lionaird's beautiful voice singing.

I would've gone back to Ireland about every two years. My husband comes from Birmingham in England and we have visited and brought our daughter, Ceara, back quite regularly to see her whanau over there. In regard to going back to Ireland it's interesting because Ireland has had huge changes economically and socially since I left. I've been here 25 years so when people ask me about Ireland today I don't feel qualified to comment because I don't live there. I go back and am amused at how the next generation lives. I'm close to my nieces and nephews and they're all now married and having children, I'm fascinated by how things go there. I've been to three enormous society weddings and it amazes me. I think they've completely lost the plot. It cost a

fortune. It used to be a night out with the girls before you got married, now they're off to Benedorm, on the south coast of Spain or the Canary Islands. They're going on overseas trips big time.

I rang my brother one day, a few years ago, and he told me his daughter had gone to New York for the weekend to go shopping. The Celtic Tiger has finished now, but when I visit their homes everything is brand spanking new. There is no such thing as second hand, they don't know what garage sales are. It's really interesting for me. The nieces who live in Dublin don't seem to have any connection with what I would call traditional Irish culture, though of course Dublin was always anglicised, in a way, so it is not as Irish as the west or the South. I do have other branches of the family in Cork and Kerry who are very keen on traditional Irish culture.

I've been very involved in Irish culture here. I'm involved in performance with my husband who's a multi-instrumentalist and despite being from Birmingham he now actually has Irish citizenship. I don't think a spouse can claim Irish citizenship now. He plays the harp, the Uilleann pipes, wooden flute, whistle, fiddle, bodhran and mandola, and he makes his living out of playing music. So he and I have played music together since we first met. We've recorded together and we run what we call Irish style dances, sort of ceilidhs really, where we hire ourselves out to people who are having an event, like a wedding or a family reunion, or it could be a conference. I teach the dances and call them and he plays.

We've brought our daughter up with Irish culture because we often have Irish music sessions, and we go to folk festivals which have a large component of Irish music. She did Irish dancing, as I set up the Irish dance club in Nelson. I loved it. I work for the Nelson Multicultural Council, and our biggest event is Race Unity Day, which happens in March, close to Race Relations Day, celebrating all the different cultures in Nelson. When this was in its infancy I went to one of those Race Unity days and I was sitting enjoying one of the performances. At the time Ceara would have been about six years of age and I was sitting next to her teacher who gave me a dig in the ribs and said "You should have an Irish culture group up there. Why don't you set up an Irish culture group?" That's what I did.

In Ceara's class there were about four kids who had Irish parents, and a number of kids in the school who had at least one Irish parent and definitely had Irish heritage. So with the school's blessing we set up an Irish culture group. They had little uniforms, and sure enough at next Race Unity Day they performed – they danced, they sang, they played instruments. My neighbour and friend, Patrick McGraw from County Galway, who was an ex-primary school teacher came and did the art works and craft side of it. We built an entire little village, we had round towers and little stone walls, Patrick taught them the Celtic script and we put on a little play.

We did all sorts of things in the Irish culture group and it had a real community feel about it. Then we found someone who was a very accomplished Irish dancer who had moved to Nelson, an Irish Kiwi who had gone right through years of Irish dance training and though she wasn't a qualified teacher she stepped up and began teaching the children. We realised how expensive costumes and shoes were so we formed an incorporated society to raise money to buy them. The parents only had to pay for lessons. That was very big while Ceara was growing up and I was very involved and president of that for years. They put on lots of shows for kids and their teacher, Clare Shannaher, put on some wonderful shows that were very popular with the public.

I think the highest point was when Bob put together a show called *Cruisich* to showcase Irish culture at its best. It was to be Irish music, Irish song, prose and poetry and visual art and it was just fantastic. It came to be because the guy who was running the Tauranga Arts Festival wanted an Irish show with a difference. We performed it there. It involved about eight of the kids who had been in the Irish culture group, had gone on to do the Irish dancing and who basically all lived around Todds Valley, – the kids from two houses away, one from across the road, very much a community thing. We had wonderful data projection of beautiful Irish art work, which Bob went to great trouble to get permission for from the National Gallery of Ireland, also from museums in Copenhagen, because some of the art was of the ancient Celtic variety. We had an actor come up from Christchurch. There was no narration: it just went seamlessly from one era into the next with appropriate prose and poetry being spoken at the side of the stage. It was a really special show.

My connections to Ireland are through my friends, the music, and through my family who have come out now lots to see me. Two of my nieces have married Kiwis. One met her Kiwi husband in Dublin, the other one, her sister got together with his friend and she came out here. That didn't work out but she met a different fella, so we have Kiwi chaps married into the family. Those Kiwi dads now have offspring and all their children have Irish names, which is quite lovely. I've got five great nieces with Irish names, so I must take it back about what I said about my nieces in Dublin.

We had a child who died, Fiachra, and his headstone is written in Irish. He lived for twelve hours. When our boy was born and subsequently died the family of our friend Mary Ellen O'Connor, who are very Irish, offered if we would like to have him buried in their O'Connor family plot, out Waimea way. He is buried with Mary Ellen's youngest sister Brigid, the sixth daughter. We got married in the church out in Waimea west, which is steeped in Irish tradition since a lot of Irish people farmed out that way.

I think that there are very evident links with Ireland and New Zealand historically. Look at the number of Irish people who have held office in the New Zealand government, and I do think the Irish have influenced Kiwi society.

I think the Irish have sympathised with Maori who were colonised by the English also. I also think Irish Catholics have a strong sense of social justice. I've had several attempts at learning te reo and I don't have any problem understanding that Maori are the first people of the land. I was taken aback when I came here and experienced the racism towards Maori and resistance to Maori culture. Around the same time as starting the Irish culture group there was a Maori culture group and I was very supportive of that and wanted Ceara to go to that, but the principal said she couldn't go to both. I said "Why not?" and he said "She can't miss two classes for cultural things. You've got to choose." It was very hard for my friend who was married to a Maori guy and her two kids are Irish Maori. So I did my best, I offered to cross stitch the head bands, I did support it. I remember conversations in the playground, parents just wanted their children to read and write in English. They just didn't get it.

This is the third bilingual country I've lived in – Ireland, Canada and New Zealand – and having another language is such an advantage for your child. It's actually giving

them the keys to learn another language. There was a resistance and I've come across this in the work place, when I worked at the hospital where there was racist rhetoric from co-workers about Maori.

In my 25 years in New Zealand I've seen great changes. Some people wouldn't dare to tell an Irish joke now. I've had situations where I've really got angry with people. I remember in the *Listener* magazine there was an article about a new series on television which was about long distance lorry drivers in Britain, one of whom was Irish. What they said about the truck driver was, "He's Irish, but he's quite intelligent." I wrote to the *Listener* and said "you wouldn't dare say that about Maori and neither should you, so how do you think you can say that about an Irish person?" I never got any joy, they never wrote back to me.

And it still happens. My Irish friend here in Nelson wrote an article for the local newspaper this year around St Patrick's Day, saying that she had lived here for twenty something years and is sick of the commercialisation of St Patrick's Day and of seeing four-leafed clovers that had nothing to do with Irish culture. She has been involved in education and last year she was invited to a school for St Patrick's Day, then was absolutely horrified that the activities put on for the children, endorsed by the board of trustees and the teachers, were so culturally offensive, including a bad hair competition and disgusting food. Afterwards she phoned the principal and explained why it was so offensive. This year she got onto the Education Board in Nelson and told them what her experience was, and that they wouldn't dare do that for another culture. She went to the newspaper which let her put her article in the newspaper. The Education Board contacted schools and said this was not on. Bit by bit you know, water dripping on a stone eventually wears a hole.

I don't put up with any disrespect for my culture or anybody else's really. I think that because I feel very strongly about my own cultural heritage as a migrant, this brings added value to my work here, which involves supporting people to keep their culture alive, celebrate it and be proud of it, and share it with the rest of us.

## Bain McGregor, Highland piper

*Bain McGregor, a Highland piper whose family comes from the Waipu area, plays a set of sterling-silver Peter Henderson pipes that his father bought in 1937. They cost eighty-three pounds, a lot of money in those days.*

*The Waipu museum generously made a room available for interviewing, a quiet space in this busy community museum.*

I basically started playing bagpipes because when I was four, I had asthma. We had a doctor here called Dr McBernie. He was an Irishman, a very dedicated doctor and a wonderful man, who worked himself to the bone for the township and ended up dying in his forties. He told my parents to make me blow up balloons and gave me medicine, but I used to grab the blow stick of my father's pipes when he was playing and blow on that, so I started blowing pipes and it seemed to rectify the problem. It puts pressure on our bronchial tubes.

I started learning when I was nine. I joined the Waipu Pipe Band with Dad when I was about ten. Dad had taught a guy called Willy Schultz, a German, to play pipes and he then taught me until a stage where I put it aside a bit and got into motor cars and stuff like that, when I was about 15. Then when I was 17, another young guy, David Picketts and I went to a man in Onerahi. We were very lucky. Angus McCauley was born in Benbecula, in the Hebrides, and his tutor was the great John MacDonald from Inverness, who was taught directly from the heritage of the MacCrimmons. The MacCrimmons composed most of the *pibroch*, the classical music of bagpipes. The great pipers of that time in Scotland were Bob Brown, Bob Nichol, the Wee Donal McLeod, because he was wee. Donal McLeod taught two very notable New Zealanders, Lewis Turrell, who is MBE, the first out of Scotland to win the gold medal in Inverness, in 1958, the year after I was born. I was very lucky we were taught by a good line – Angus taught me. I then won the gold medal in Hastings in 1984.

I was born in New Zealand, fourth generation now. My ancestors originally left from roundabout Greenock in Scotland. Then they went to Nova Scotia, in the 1820s and they bought land there, 200 acres, right in St Ann's. I'm hoping to go over next year and see.



There were two lots, my father's grandparents came over on the *Ellen Lewis*, and my father's mother's grandparents came on the *Margaret* which is the first boat. My Nana was a McGregor before she married a McGregor. I don't think it was too close or that there was too much of a link they could find. That's why my father's mother's side of the family were called the Leavy McGregors. They lived up at the bottom of the Brynderwyns (hills south of Whangarei). Her mother was a McLeod, obviously related to the Reverend Norman, I think, but my father's father's side were all related to the Kemps. From what I can gather they were in Kaiwaka when they arrived. Then they moved back here to Waipu. Roderick McGregor was the local blacksmith. The blacksmith shop was on the corner of Millbrook and the Braigh, the main road: they called it The Junction. It must have been one of the first blacksmith shops. We've still got old horseshoes and things out on the farm.

I never knew my father's father, he died in 1942 and I wasn't born until 1957. When my father was over in the 21<sup>st</sup> Battalion, fighting in Italy, he fought at the Battle of Cassino, and while he was over there his own dad died. There was a big age gap between my nana and my granddad: He was 76 when he died and Nana lived till 89. She died in 1971. There was 20-something years between them, but they did that in those days. Apparently the man wanted to be well-established.

I remember my Nana vividly. She was a lively lovely lady, very kind. She used to talk about her mother, a McLeod, who was rather a stern person. She used to tell me a few stories, about down the Braigh; how her brother Johnny used to sneak over in the horse and gig and pick them up at night time. They used to have sacks over the old sash windows. They'd sneak out and go to the dance at the hall which used to be at The Junction, and he'd get them back again. The parents didn't notice, which is quite humorous.

My Nana was a staunch Presbyterian: She always went to church every Sunday. My uncle who lived with her was a bachelor. They used to leave a person back with the parents during war time. Dad was the only one who did travel. My Uncle Don, Uncle Jock, Aunty Cathy, Dad and Uncle Bill – five in the family. My Uncle Donny was diagnosed with a heart problem about the age of 28 or 29. He played pipes, and played them before my father, but my father used to listen to him behind the bedroom door.

Uncle Don used to go down to Auckland to John McKenzie to get lessons, but after the diagnosis he stopped playing pipes, so my father carried on.

Most of them were in the pipe band. My Uncle Jock played the bass drum in the pipe band, my father played pipes. Uncle Bill didn't, but he did Highland dancing as a boy. So they were heavily involved in the Highland Games. I hear stories how Nana was up at four o'clock in the morning milking cows and then ironing spats. I don't think my father's fathers played any instrument and I don't know if anyone on my father's mother's side played instruments, not pipes. All that family on nana's side were strong church goers. The Reverend Norman McLeod had gone by then. He was the only one who discouraged playing instruments, though you hear stories about the McKenzies playing under the bridge. All these funny antics went on because McLeod didn't appreciate music inside the church, from what we can gather.

In 1985 I applied for a job in Scotland. This gentleman, John Hanning, had gone to Scotland and played at Blair Castle in 1980 when he travelled with the Wellington Pipe Band. He was asked to play there again but he couldn't because of work commitments. So, having just won the gold medal, I got the job as piper in residence for the tenth Duke of Athol, Ian Murray. My job was to play in the morning while all the bus tours came, then again in the afternoon. I lived on the premises at the castle.

It was great experience, a six month stint. During that time I was competing solo. I got over to North and South Uist and competed over there. That's where I saw my tutor Angus McCauley's name on all the cups, so that was quite eerie, and I met his cousin over from Canada. He was a tall man like Angus. Angus was a very tall, big man. He was in the Lovat Scouts, so he had good stature. He was a gentleman but you didn't cross him. I got two thirds over there.

While in Scotland I met my first wife Helen. Her parents were from Bangor in Northern Ireland originally. Her father worked for BP, in charge of the rail division, but he got a letter bomb in the mail while he was in Ireland so they shipped him over to Scotland. She would have been 13 when she arrived in Scotland. She spoke French and German fluently, hence she ended up at the castle as a guide while I was there.

I had jobs as a chauffeur in Fifeshire and at Auclerarder at Gleneagles golf course in the Stirlingshire area. During this time I joined up with the Vale of Atholl Pipe Band, rated third in the world, at that time, playing for a season, and also played at Braemar. A couple of gentlemen who were in New Zealand, Roy Gunn and Donald Bain, jacked it up for me to get lessons for solo performance from Jimmy McGregor who was in Blair Atholl while I was on was in Fifeshire. Gleneagles has four courses, Kings, Queens, Princes and Glendevon. I was on the Queens course. The Scots seem to like Kiwis and I had had engine experience with lawn mowers. Because I was over 28 or 29 I had to reapply for my visa. It was going to run out in early April, so in February I wrote a letter and sent them my passport, saying I wished to further my musical career and quoted Jimmy McGregor saying I had been working at Gleneagles. They wanted to make sure you weren't on the dole, bludging off the system. So it came to the end of May and I began to get worried because I had no passport and it would have been expired anyway. I couldn't move, so I rang them in England. I had asked for an extension of six months, because you couldn't stay any longer. Finally I received my passport. They'd stamped it for a whole year, saying "we hope you enjoy your stay in Scotland, and we are pleased you are extending your musical career. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you wish to extend it even more."

I was a lucky man. I met Helen, and lovely people in Blair Athol who took me under their wing and looked after me like parents. People in Scotland were so open house, quiet, unassuming. They don't say much until they get to know you, then you have friends for life. I found the Scots girls were much more approachable than New Zealand girls. None of this men doing one thing and women doing another, none of this business where women go to the kitchen. You go to the pubs and all the girls and the guys mingle. People go there to converse. The girls were so much more mature, open.

I didn't learn any Gaelic but I do *canterach*, which is music, singing of tunes that I learned from Angus, based on what's played on the pipes. Pibroch is classical music. It's like chamber music: it has an *ular*, or "a ground" which is the start of the tune, then it leads onto variations which increasingly get more difficult, until you get to the *taorluath* and the *crunauath* which are finger technically difficult, but it still keeps the theme of the tune. A short pibroch will last for 10 or 12 minutes, then there are ones

like the “Lament for Donald Bain MacCrimmon,” which last 23 to 25 minutes. While the judges are reading the music you don’t have a book in front of you. In a lot of competitions you have to submit either four or six of these tunes and they’ll pick one. I used to practise three hours a day.

Just before I came back, in 1987, they wanted me to be the pipe major of the Whangarei Pipe Band, so I ended up being that, and I still am. Before I left for Scotland I was the pipe major of the Waipu band here, from 18 or 19 years old. When I got back from Scotland, I won the gold medal class in Hastings, pibroch, also the barch, strathspey and reel, 1990. I’m now a judge. I first judged in 1993, I’ve been judging gold medal. I’ve judged in Hastings, Dunedin, and Christchurch.

Helen and I first lived in Whangarei, I worked at the polytech and Helen worked at the *Northern Advocate*, for the Crawford family. She was very clever. In the time we were married we had three kiddies, Briar, in 1989, then Rowan and Sharne. Helen was also very musical, she played the French horn and joined up with the Whangarei District Brass and played tenor horn. She learned the tenor drum while I was in the Vale of Athol in Scotland. She decided if you can’t beat them, join them, which is what she did, she joined me in the pipe band. She drank pints of beers or cider like the rest of us. That was all good. She was taught by Paul Turner, playing for the Vale of Atholl, leading tap originally for the RUC, Royal Ulster Constabulary Band in Ireland, who were the world champion drum corp. She joined us playing in pipe band competitions playing tenor drum. Helen and I were involved in the instigation, along with Dougie Chowns and Mike Paterson, of the Gaeltacht, the Celtic Summer School which started 1990 and is still going.

About 1994 or 1995 because my Uncle Bill died, we went back to the home farm, and we re-renovated the old villa which was built between 1902 and 1905, and reblocked it. There was a gentleman in the brass band, Wally Burns, a clever old fellow who did his apprenticeship on these old villas, he knew them inside out, so he helped us.

We went to several contests with the pipe band and Helen went with the brass band to different contests as well and we used to combine the pipe band and brass band for concerts in Whangarei. I’ve put on concerts with the pipe band. I have a backing band,

with the pipe band – a keyboardist, a couple of guitarists and a kitset drummer so it jazzes the whole thing up.

Sadly Helen passed away in 2003. She got breast cancer. They gave her two years but she lived for three. She died the day before her birthday on 3<sup>rd</sup> of June: On the 4<sup>th</sup> she would have been 37. Sharne was only four. We had managed to get back overseas in 2001 and saw all of Helen's sisters, she had five. One of them had got married. We also did Europe, France, Italy, Venice and Germany.

My attitude has changed, definitely, especially with the people you meet who are very warm and welcoming into their homes. That opens another door to thought and attitudes, meeting all these young people, when I was young, so open book and easy to talk. This is happening more in New Zealand.

I think there has been a Scottish influence in New Zealand society, if you look at the Kiwi ingenuity, and you look at who are some of the great inventors of the world, the Scots. When Kiwis couldn't import cars back in the early days, during the days of the Depression, I remember my grandparents saying they used to fill up tyres with grass to keep them going if they got a puncture. So that's where the old number eight wire saying came from.

I also think looking at my nana's side, my father's mother's side, they were very loving and caring, and loved families, whereas on my mother's side they've got English in them, more of that Victorian attitude that I didn't like even as a child. On my nana's side, and the same with Helen and I, we always had open house, always a door open for people. You don't worry what people think, you have fun and that's what the Scots are like, they like having a good time. A lot of people I met were good singers. So I think people over here do have a lot of that.

For about three years now I've been the chief of the Caledonian Society here at Waipu. I've been involved with the museum too since I was young. I used to mow the lawns there when I was younger. I've been heavily involved with the history of the Waipu area. I used to compete at the Highland Games, also with my father who was involved, and a lot of the old guys like, Trevor MacKenzie and Alec McClean. My father had been a past chief. The Caledonian Society owns the park here. It's one of the

only parks that are privately owned – most councils own parks – so we need to upkeep it. We have the Highland Games here, one of the biggest in this hemisphere, in Australasia, held on the first of January. At the last games there were about 6,000 people here.

We are lucky we've got people like Pat Helier who is NZ's reigning champion heavy weight. He's been to Scotland, and represented New Zealand there. Also here we have heavyweights, track events, Highland dancing, piping, the dancing association and one event by the Scottish Official Board (of Highland Dancing). We hold all the solo piping, A to D grade and novice, and also drumming. The night before I hold a special event which we got going about four years ago, the Helen McGregor Memorial Medley, an open medley in which pipers can do what they like. It's held in the Coronation Hall on the 31<sup>st</sup>, and it's judged, though the crowd can participate too. They have a maximum of eight minutes, there are no rules. It's good because there are a lot of good young pipers who can get up and do all these slippery notes.

When the old people arrived they didn't want to push anybody off the land, so I understand. What I can gather is when McLeod spoke to Governor Grey, the Governor General of New Zealand in the 1850s, in Melbourne, because they wanted to get out of Melbourne, he asked if there were any other people in this place. There were Maori here. From what I've heard, Parliament wanted to shaft them out of the way, but the Novies said no, we've been pushed off our land, so they acted as spokespersons in parliament for them. This story is probably not accepted by everyone around the area. The thing is a lot of the people here got on well. My uncle, my father's brother married a Maori lady, so I've got Maori cousins.

The only sad thing that I see personally, and I think many others do too, is people are wanting all these things back. Well it would be nice for all of us if we went back to Scotland and asked for everything back. When really they should be watching out who else is coming in the back door.

## ***Writing the Stories***

Keri Hulme, writer

*Keri Hulme is perhaps most widely known for her novel *The Bone People*, which won the international Booker Prize in 1985. She has also published short stories, *Te Kaihu/Windeater*, and three collections of poems: *Lost Possessions*, *Silences Between: Moeraki Conversations and Strands*. She has written too about South Island areas that are important to her: *Moeraki*, *Okarito* and *Rakiura* (Stewart Island). She has held writing fellowships at Otago and Canterbury universities and has served as a Literary Fund adviser, on the Indecent Publications Tribunal and as a cultural ambassador.*

*We talked in the home of Keri's mother, in Oamaru, where members of the family have lived since the 1860s. One of the flowers in the garden that lines the path to the cottage was brought back from the Somme, where a great-uncle died.*

My Gaelic connection is through my mother, Mary Miller, whose mother Maryanne Yulston Matches was born in New Zealand, the eldest of seven children born to a Mrs Dinnington, who had been married before, and William Yulston Matches. William came from Kirkwall, Mainland, the biggest island in the Orkney group. Kirkwall, named because St Magnus built a cathedral there that still stands, was the little town that grew up by the kirk wall. His parents had a shop in the town. The bell from that wee shop wound up at Moeraki and Uncle Bill gave it to one of the Matches boys when he went to the North Island. He had a good sense of family, thinking Billy should have it going to the heathen north. That was the bell Nana used to ring when we were out on the beach at Moeraki, saying, "food, come on if you're hungry."

William came out to New Zealand, when Dunedin was being settled, and people like Orcadians were deliberately recruited for farming and fishing ability. He met Mrs Dinnington, who as we found out from the Dinnington family tree very recently had bought this corner acre of land, at the corner of Wansbeck and Lune streets, in Oamaru where he had a small farmlet. Well he is reputed to have run a cow here. The land has always been occupied by Matches descendants. Next door was where the great aunts lived. Florence Matches and Maryanne Cynthia Yulston Matches married Kai Tahu brothers. Later on Florence was widowed quite early and her sister Cynths was also

widowed quite early. Aunty Doll was almost certainly Downs Syndrome, from all that we remember. She was just known as remarkably sweet and remarkably slow. The three sisters lived next door all the time. It was only in the late 1950s that the other parts of the corner section were alienated and then built on. My granddad's garden used to be there.

Nan was bought up on a farm and my granddad too. They were churchly people, and both came from very big families so the farm got divided and sold. I've got their courting letters, which Mary refuses to read, but I found them utterly wonderful, particularly Tom's description of walking 21 miles to visit. They were "Free Kirkers" – a splintered sect of Presbyterians who didn't like being ruled by a convention. Quite a few of them migrated to New Zealand. They were very strong minded, proud but very obstinate. A really remarkable thing is that there is, at least on one of the Matches children's side, a history of alcoholism, but the other ones were all Temperance pledged.

Florence played the organ for over sixty years at Columba Church down the hill there. And while she was really past it, when my sister Mary Emma got married she did as she'd promised: She played the organ for their wedding. She was also one of the first New Zealand women to get her teaching letters. That's how she earned an income for next door, taking piano and organ pupils. She taught Gillian Weir who is quite a name in organ music.

The other thing about this place, there is a trade trail that went through it, formed by an ancestor, Te Ruahikihiki. Based at Kaiapoi, he initiated the formal trade trails that went the length of the South Island. They traded pounamu as the main trade coin. Other things traded between the various hapu of Kai Tahu were the seasonal goodies, for instance, eels from Lake Ellesmere. You could get eels anywhere but they were specialists. For us it would be titi [muttonbirds], and weka from Central. They walked this land and it is important to remember they were also good boat people, in the South on both mokihi, rafts, and the waka of course. They sailed all the waters, paddled all the water ways. Mary and I do have Kati Mamoe links, but primarily Kai Tahu.



One of the fascinating things about this photo (*of Keri's mother's parents*) is, because this is a wedding portrait, which would have been sent back to family in Scotland, his face has been ever so slightly bleached. Take a look at his hand. He has gloves in one hand, but the other hand, you can actually see his colour. He was not a white man. My nana was very happy and so was her sister who married his brother. I do know that the racism of magazines and particularly newspapers was stunning. But they were obstinate, willful, stubborn people who follow their hearts and do what the spirit led them to do. John R Miller was also Hone Rakahino Mira; his father was a high chief and recognised by Pakeha people at Karitane particularly around Waikouaiti, where his grandfather was an interesting bloke.

His grandmother was from a West Coast family. She mated with an American whaler because marriage just wasn't in the offing. I've heard that John Miller was part Tahitian. He was American Tahitian, though I've never been able to trace this down except from anecdote. I heard this in Tahiti. Piraurau left the West Coast, it was a time of turmoil, as a Kati Tama person raided the West Coast and quite a lot of the Coasters fled. She bore John's father in Colac Bay and left her son with relatives at Waikouaiti. She went on to Akaroa and there raised another family with another whaler, shore-based. She is known to history as Sarah White. Her Akaroa family didn't realise she had had an earlier child until we turned up at a family reunion, said "Hello, we're actually the seniors here." Just to emphasise I have deep Maori roots as well as the Scots one, especially the Scots one.

New Zealand born Celts were far and away more enlightened than a lot of their English compatriots. Have you heard of the Hicketty Pips, the Sixty-fifth Regiment of Foot that fought in the Land Wars? One of their soldiers is recorded as saying, by a disinterested observer, an English person attached to the Hicketty Pips, "For sure why are we fighting them? They're just the same as us, with their babies, their pigs and their potatoes." At that stage Maori were growing potatoes which had been introduced in the eighteenth century. They couldn't see the point of fighting people who they found were fighting for their land and were like themselves.

Over there, there used to be an Orion coal range. Nana cooked on it from the time this place was built. Porridge was a staple, the other thing I remember very well as a

special treat, white bread was dried in the oven and spread with butter. I don't ever remember not being able to make scones and potato cakes because that was what you did. I've still got a griddle iron and can still make oat cakes. Nana made stews and rice puddings, though they were not particularly Scots. Her elder son was a hunter, and she made the most magnificent browned stew.

Religion, aue, I remember very reluctantly being dragged along to St Columba, but it never stuck. The other thing that I find was particularly obvious to me, as a bookish child, was the reverence that books and reading were held in. That chiffonier, in the corner, was one of Nana's that used to be quite a lovely dark wood until an uncle painted it. Mary has china in it but it used to be full of books. That's where the books were kept.

We still find pipe and drum music to be extremely evocative and I've never understood the distaste that some people show for it. To me it's extremely stirring music. There is a strong music gene. Auntie Florence and her husband got on in part because he was an excellent violinist. Tom not so much, but one of Nana's brothers, who was an alcoholic, was a gun mouth organ player. If you don't believe that a mouth organ can light up a room, well oh yes it can.

Singing has always been part of life. I grew up with a hoard of songs in my childhood. Fortunately my father also liked singing and he had a very good voice. He and Mary used to sing when we were driving to Oamaru. I'm just sorry the younger kids never got to hear that, or to any degree, because they blended beautifully.

One way or another I got sponsored overseas trips and Mary and I have been to Edinburgh twice, and to Glasgow, but we could never get to the Orkneys. It was weather dependent both for the plane and the ferry. However my brother Andrew spent some time there and Mary's younger brother Uncle Rainey also got there. Somewhere around I have some super eight film he took of the cemetery where there are Matches head stones, and also of St Magnus's Cathedral in Kirkwall.

Aue, aue, I think it is extremely important, but as far as I know none of the Matches children were given any Gaelic. Certainly Nan never used it. But I do think it is important, which is why I'm very keen on family members learning Maori as well. It's a

shame that the Gaelic wasn't properly introduced. I understand Orcadian Gaelic is pretty strange. It has a lot Norse words in it and some of those Norse words Nana used to speak of, like lifting a *home* of potatoes which is spelt "holme" and comes directly from Norwegian. She also talked about a *kist*, which was a chest they originally kept oatmeal in. Out there in the kitchen used to be a tilt-lidded thing I've now got at Okarito, in which there was always a sack of flour and later on converted kerosene tins of sugar and almost certainly oatmeal. It was kept in the scullery. Those two words I remember particularly because they were odd.

Nana was a story teller and I grew up terrifying my five younger siblings with horror stories. We've all got extremely good vocabularies as Nana and the uncles did, and we are readers. I simply fell into writing because I could amuse myself. I've worked at a very large number of jobs, but I much prefer to control my own time and affairs. The choice - no, I think sometimes your work chooses you, rather than the other way around - was enhanced by the respect that language was held in, not just reading. You were careful with your words because you had to convey meaning. None of us in the family are sloppy speakers, we think as we speak, most times. I have 162 kinds of dictionaries. Words are a particular pleasure for us whether sung or spoken or written.

I'm the wrong kind of person to ask about life experiences, I just hibernate basically. But when it comes to funerals the cultural connection comes up, and at family parties simply because we like certain kinds of music and it tends not to be hip hop. By and large, all my siblings have been married, some more than once, but it tends to be done by celebrants. Funerals tend to be done by family and a celebrant doesn't tend to be anything to do with a church. The sister next to me Diane was initially married in a church because her first husband was Irish Catholic, a Coaster, and Mary Emma was married in a church because she was raised largely by my Nana and Uncle Bill here, and was schooled in Oamaru, so she wanted to be married here in St Columba Church.

Because I knew of the Scots/Norse connection one of my first loves was reading mythology and I got deeply involved in Norse rather than Scots mythology, but that was around anyway. It was like knowing about taniwha – you can't remember learning about taniwha. My regret is that I've never been to Orkney. I think it was stronger during my childhood because there were the people around and now they've all gone.

Not that Mary isn't fully aware and cognisant of her Scots heritage because she is, but it's not the same. The direct link was with my nana and the great-aunts next door, and her mother who actually lived there for a while.

Gordon McLauchlan wrote a diatribe about this [the Kiwi psyche] in the 1970s. But there was nothing lacking passion from my olds that I can see. I live amongst the most Irish intensive settled area of New Zealand on the Coast and they are very passionate people too. I just found that stupid. So I don't think that's the effect of the Scots and Irish.

We've got very strong Dunedin links, also a McLauchlan in the family, and I see Dunedin as being an emphatically Scottish place. To me what both Celtic peoples gave is arts and education thank you very much. Yes there are still Scottish games. I was fascinated to see a wee place called Hororata, inland from Christchurch, is resurrecting itself centred on Scottish games.

But there has been a huge contribution from people of Scots and Irish descent to the arts and to education in New Zealand. I think that is a very strong input, and not least the fact that Celts intermarried very easily with Maori.

Some of the Irish and the Scots were blatantly on the side of the colonisers, but among less ambitious or greedy people it was a matter of allying with Maori, particularly here in the south, because Kai Tahu didn't have the same kind of history that the North Island had. Also while we were shat on basically by the people who came here, very early on we were intermarrying with them. Particularly in the south, the further you go south it's very difficult to find people who haven't got Kai Tahu links, especially Scots. I can't say so much for the Irish because there aren't any Irish in the family, well there isn't now.

I think there was an empathy, particularly for people who maybe came from the Clearances areas in Scotland. This didn't happen in the Orkneys though. There wasn't the same laird system. There was an empathy simply for the fact that they understood what being dispossessed was and they understood what being invaded was. That's something that is residual.

My father was born in New Zealand but was of Lancashire descent, Border people basically. One of the counts against him as far as the family was concerned was that he was of English descent. I've never liked England very much. I appreciate the language very much, and I partly trained as a lawyer so I've got an empathy for the legal system, but the English per se, though I've been there several times, I cannot understand them: I cannot read their body language. I can't appreciate their very odd little ways. They seem ungenerous, inhospitable people, those things count highly with the family.

I think there is a lot of unresolved anger lurking in this country from people, whether Maori or some of the people who came here, not just as colonisers, they came to get away from situations in their homeland that were unbearable. But that anger is something I'm very leery of in people of Aotearoa/ New Zealand. It's a poison – it will flare up the harder things get. I certainly recognise it even within my own tribe, but I've encountered examples of it in North Island hui that really are stunning. They are not just aware of their very legitimate grievances, they keep them, as we do here in the South, we remember. One of the people I was very fond of was Irihapeti Ramsden, a member of the Spiral Collective, who said "We always forgive dear, but we never forget."

*(I remarked that I understand that "not forgetting" because my mother, as the daughter of Irish born immigrants, used to talk about past events and people who lived a long time in the past, almost as easily as she would about the scones she was making).*

I think that might be a resonance. The English have history everywhere and I think they find that they're comfortable with their actual history. "We are the people who were made to go out and conquer the world" and they tolerate injustices there. Whereas I certainly know for Kai Tahu here, we never forget our history but we also work to change what history has thrust upon us. I don't think the English do. I don't think they've ever reconciled the fact that all their colonies are gone, except for some in the West Indies.

Michael O'Leary, publisher, novelist

*Michael O'Leary wrote the following song for the Dunedin Irish band Blackthorn, in the early 1990s.*

***Potatoes, Fish and Children***

*To escape from the famine, starvation and pain*

*And seeing his dear ones dying*

*Patrick Fitzgerald left old Erin's Isle*

*And headed for the South Seas sailing*

*He landed here without a pig or a bob*

*And decided to join the army*

*Because it was the only job*

*To take the land from the Maori*

***CHORUS. . .***

*He thinks to himself by the fire at night*

*I don't know why we kill them*

*O, sure they're the same as the people at home*

*Potatoes, fish and children*

*His orders were clear to set up a fight*

*So the crown could claim confiscation*

*Of land to which they had no legal right*

*By the treaty which founded the nation*

*As Paddy thought of it more and more*

*He could see that this land grabbing was not need*

*But just like at home in Ireland*

*They were killing for profit and greed*

*CHORUS. . .*

*Then one winter when the cloud hung low*

*And the moon was hidden by mist and by damp*

*He picked up his gun and some food in a sack*

*And crept silently out of the soldiers' camp*

*He travelled by night and he rested by day*

*To escaped from the pay of the crown*

*He woke up by the winter moon risin'*

*And went to sleep when the moon went down*

*CHORUS. . .*

*The beauty he saw in this wonderful land*

*Reminded him of his far away home*

*He fell asleep for a very long time*

*And he dreamed that he was no longer alone*

*The tribe that found him took his body back*

*From te wahi moemoea and restored him to life*

*For they saw in his eyes when they opened*

*Potatoes fish and children*

*CHORUS. . .*

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*The Oxford Companion to New Zealand Literature records that Michael O’Leary, publisher, poet, novelist, performer and bookshop proprietor, “has made a colourful contribution to the literary scene in three cities.”*

*Of Maori, Te Arawa, Irish Catholic heritage, he was born in Auckland in 1950 and educated there and in Otago. He now lives at Paekakariki, north of Wellington, and runs a second-hand bookshop in the old wooden building on the railway station. He has published his own work and that of many other writers under his Earl of Seacliff Art Workshop imprint.*

*His sister Clare generously drove me out to speak with her brother, and back again to Wellington.*

We’ve been here about five generations, mainly Irish on both sides of the family, my mother was a Fitzgerald. There is some Maori on my mother’s side, and a bit of German. Our main experience was Irish Catholic. We went to an Irish Catholic primary school, they were all Irish Catholic nuns who came out from Ireland. We couldn’t afford to go to a Catholic secondary school because Dad was in prison when I was going to secondary school, and you had to pay fees and all that, so we went to an ordinary



secondary school. Most of my friends went to a secondary Catholic school. In those day boys were separated out from the girls in Form One.

Our grandmother was bedridden in the house for 11 years, with our mother looking after her. There were seven of us living in a two bedroom house. We were outside playing most of the time as children. Gran died and Dad went to prison within about a month, 1963, 1964. Life got turned upside down after that and three years later both my parents died in 1968. Mum died about six months after Dad died. I can remember one of my aunties talking to me on the phone, saying it must have been good to have your religion with you. I couldn't think of it like that. Nowadays I don't go to church but I acknowledge that it's been a part of my life. It's underpinned most of my adult life. My political and cultural sort of life are very much influenced by that background. The major part of being a Catholic that I kept is the compassion aspect, and it's a big part of the way I've approached life. But I had so many friends who rebelled against Catholicism, they ended up screwed up or on drugs or became Buddhist, trying to replace it with something else. I thought, "This is what I am. I don't see any sense in not calling myself a Catholic." I always say I miss the Mass being said in Latin, because who wants to belong to a religion you can understand?

I remember going to midnight mass once in Dunedin when I lived down there. There was a woman down the back drinking a bottle of whisky. We were passing it around with the priest up the front. It was interesting there was a young woman there, from one of the Lebanese Catholic families, who said to me how great it was to be part of tradition that was two thousand years old. It's good to think of it like that, because in New Zealand the Pakeha world is only 150 years old. The Maori part of it is so much older. So much of the story of the New Zealand Pakeha experience is based on people coming here to get away from bad situations at home, but in order to do that they've had to suppress and brutalise other people, which is what that song "Potatoes Fish and Children" is about. There's people who suffer everywhere. You look at what's happening in the Arab world at the moment: The rich rulers just want to hang onto their privilege.

No I haven't visited Ireland. The main reason being that me and money don't like each other: As soon as we meet we part company. People say, "Why don't you go to Ireland?" and I say, "Sometimes I can't afford the train to Wellington."

I never grew up with books, we never had books in the house as kids, but I've ended up becoming a writer, a publisher and a bookseller. I became aware of words in the sixties when I got interested in the Beatles because I really related to the words to their songs.

When I was at primary school, a whole group of kids would be walking home, and I used to tell stories to the other kids. They'd ask, "Where did you get that from?" I said, "I made it up." There's always been that story-telling aspect to my life before I even knew about it. And then I ended up leaving school without any qualifications and went to work in a factory and all that. I did School C and UE at night school eventually and then went to university and became very interested in literature and what it meant, as a way of my personal growth. I started out to be an artist. I went to art school for a while, but for some reason I switched to writing. It's funny because I've just finished my PhD thesis, and now I've gone back to painting.

Recently I've sort of come full circle and I'm working on this CD, which has got several local musicians making songs based on my poetry. My writing develops over a period of several years. I take about three or four years thinking about most of the things I write, before I start writing them, so when I actually write them it doesn't take that long because I've developed all the material. I'm not one of those writers who write every day. Some people say 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration, well I'm the opposite, if I'm not inspired I don't write.

Nineteen ninety was the 150<sup>th</sup> year of the Treaty of Waitangi, and I wanted to write the history of New Zealand from the Irish point of view rather than the English point of view. So in 1990 I wrote *The Irish Annal of New Zealand*, which got turned into a play that Clare, my sister, filmed. It was in town in Wellington for two weeks. It wasn't planned this way but it was adapted for the stage by a playwright called Simon O'Connor, directed by David O'Donnell and the music was done by Chris O'Connor. It was an amazing sort of project. It's an expression of my internal life as well as the

external political events. It's what I've always been interested in as a writer, using those introverted feelings and thoughts to transplant them into things that happen outside of me, like political or historical, or social events.

The only time I've really read *Finnigan's Wake* successfully, I sat down one night with a bottle of whisky and read it out loud in an Irish accent. It made perfect sense but I had no idea what it was about the next morning. It's the language and the thoughts. Sometimes when I talk I find myself speaking it almost in an Irish accent, just the emphasis on different words. I really like Shane MacGowan, the singer from The Pogues. He's a very interesting man, a great writer. He writes most of the songs, but unfortunately he's a terrible drinker, he can't hold his drink. I remember him talking on a show one time about the kinds of things that we're talking about. He made very articulate, very interesting comments about the London Irish. We're a bit like that, but once removed again, both in terms of 150 years and 12, 000 miles. It's so deep in you that you can't sort of ignore.

Celebration is very much the Irish Celtic way of looking at things in terms of the way they've responded to oppression, being murdered and subjected over many generations and they still come out dancing and singing. It's amazing, great really; that spirit is just remarkable. I'm not implying that other cultures don't have it at all, but all I can talk about is what I know, and it's a big part of that kind of culture. And the emphasis is on storytelling and dreams and the imagination being far more important than logical, dualistic Western thought.

It's going to be more and more important to have that life affirming spirit with all this computer age, because so many things nowadays are set up to control people and control our lives, it's important to have something to offset that. Even if you are part of that life you've still got to have that ability to lose yourself in a song. I think that's why the Beatles were so important to our generation as well, because they unleashed all that conformity that was around, by use of the imagination and music, humour and wit, bringing a bit of joy and happiness into the world. When people start killing each other that's when you realise the life has gone out of any culture.

On the radio this morning they were talking about the recent happenings in Ireland where people have been fighting each other again, in Belfast and in Derry, because of the Orange Order marches. Those people know that this is going to happen, why do they do it? But it is the disaffected youth and all that kind of stuff as well, it's a lot more complicated.

Those kinds of things happened with the Mods and Rockers in England, but in Ireland it's got the added thing of generations of people being put down for being who they are. That's going to take a long time to change. To a certain extent you have it here. The way society is set up here with the Maori population, the way it was dealt with was different to other areas of the British Empire, if you like. A lot of people feel disaffected here. I just saw the film about the Tuhoe and the raids against them a few years ago. That was exactly the same thing. It was also to test the anti-terrorist laws, the state versus the people. It's what's happening in the Arab world. It's just tragic.

But the Irish situation is so difficult. I've just read a biography of Van Morrison, he makes such beautiful music, but he has a nasty sort of Protestantism, born just round the road from Paisley, and even though he left Belfast and Ireland to get away from it he still carried it with him. It's generations of hatred and that kind of siege mentality. I watched a tragic documentary the other night about Dublin and what's happened since the IRA has decommissioned its weapons. All that pent up energy has gone into the drug world now.

Bernadette Hall, poet

*Bernadette Hall has published nine collections of poetry and The Lustre Jug which drew on her experience of living for six months in Ireland, in County Cork, and was a finalist in the New Zealand Post Book Awards. The poems explore many aspects of the past and the present in Ireland. Poems in earlier collections draw on Irish family connections and life in New Zealand.*

*Bernadette has held writing fellowships and residences, as well as going to Antarctica on an Artists in Antarctica award. She taught high school Latin and Classics and has been a poetry editor. A co-founder of the Hagley Writers Institute in Christchurch in 2008, she taught an MA Creative Writing class at the International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University in Wellington, in 2011. She lives at Amberley Beach in North Canterbury.*

Ireland isn't home..... I feel a very different creature here, there's a freedom, there's space and there's room to breathe. I think maybe the Irishness still continues to give me a standing ground. It still validates that voice, the independent voice of the outsider. It's far more important to me than praise, though praise is nice. That sense of having completed something which I value, but which also somehow has the voice of an outsider, that really pleases me most.

My father was born in Strabane, in County Tyrone, in 1908 before Ireland was divided, and he was brought out here as a small child, to Waitati, north of Dunedin. His parents were Protestants and his family were active in the Orange Order. It struck me as being hugely important that my dad was different from my Catholic mum and her sisters, and that he had links with Ireland. My mother's great grandmother had been one of three Catholic teenage girls who came out to Lyttelton on their own in 1866. I was educated by Sisters of St Joseph at Holy Name School in Dunedin, quite a small school. It was a very lovely experience.

My dad didn't attend any religious groups or ceremonies, but he always made sure that we went. He was very very positive with that. When I wanted to become a nun at the age of twelve, and insisted so much and fought with my mother about it because she was so anti, he was the one who said, "Well if she wants to, she does." The Sisters of St

Joseph were so impressive that a friend and I decided we'd go and join them at the age of twelve, do our education and continue that way. There was a place in Shirley in Christchurch, called the Juniorate, where we would have gone. For quite a long time afterwards I felt guilty I hadn't gone, but now I think, "oh thank God." But it was my dad who said, "No that had to be done." A gorgeous, gorgeous man. He died very dramatically and suddenly, he just dropped dead of a heart attack, when I was sixteen. I'd just come home from school and said hello to him. He was in the shower, I heard this terrible thump and he died. So he has been huge in my emotional growth, or lack of growth. Apparently I didn't speak to my family for a year. I hadn't forgotten it, I think I'd just put that away, but one of my sisters said to me recently at a family gathering, "Why didn't you talk to us for that whole year?" My dear friend who's a Dominican sister and a psychotherapist said, "You must have been so angry," and I think I probably was.

Ireland has always been hugely emotional for me, to do with division, division in the family. When my father died his brother wouldn't come into the house because a Catholic priest was there. So it was full of passion and drama. My mum used to love the stories about the IRA bombers just making it back over into Southern Ireland, lying in the car because they've been wounded and they meet their best friend. I've forgotten what novel this was, the friend is an English soldier, and the IRA guy dies in his friend's arms on the border. That was all part of the drama and the romance.

Living in that small area, in north Dunedin where I grew up, everything was centred around the church, so that Irish culture was part of all that. We were right. We were a small group and we were right and the English were wrong.

I was born in Alexandra in Central Otago where my dad was post master, and then moved to Dunedin when I was about two. So strangely enough I was uplifted and translated to a different place just as he was when he was a child. The Irishness continued through Holy Name School and St Dominic's where I was for secondary school, not often taught by Irish women. So I think really the Irishness came more from my sense of my dad and the family. His family had come out too. I can remember his mother, my grandmother, a very strong little woman. She had given public speeches for prohibition and the odd thing was my dad really liked a drop. So again as a child

growing up there were the tensions, or the difference between marvellous pride in this grandmother and my dad enjoying a drop, a bit much some times. A beautiful and loving man. When he died, I was sixteen, so I had no part in the organising of the funeral, but his body stayed in our house, like a wake, what we would think of as a wake, though we've never been to a real Irish one. My mother's three sisters were Catholic, and very close, and they gathered, their husbands and their older children.

My dad had been taking some instruction from a priest living near us, Father Fealey, sometimes in my imagination I call him the whiskey priest. I don't know why he was living in a house on his own and not really engaged with the parish. But when my dad collapsed like that my mum called to me to run and get the district nurse who lived next door, the ex-district nurse, and to run and get the priest. So he was actually baptised as she was holding him as he was dying I suppose, and that really enraged his brother, I think. He wasn't angry or I can't remember him being angry at the funeral, but I remember him standing outside in the rain with his coat on, a very dark haired, dark skinned man, and he just withdrew himself from it because there was a priest in the house. There always seems to be high emotion to do with the Irishness.

I used to be trying to put on pretend Irish accents. It seemed a point of interest, something that made us different, or might be interesting if we were linked with that. Dad's name was James Sproule Colquhoun Gilkison. The Colquhoun was the Scots spelling of his mother's maiden name, Colhoun. His ancestors probably came to Ireland from Scotland at the time of the Plantations. I remember him telling me a story about an uncle of his riding through the village in a cart in Strabane saying "down with the papists." I went to school and told Sister Leo about my dad and Ireland and everything. I had no idea what the story was, I was just proud of my uncle, riding through, being alternative. I think I've written about it.

Even as I'm talking to you I'm thinking maybe that sense of being an outsider, standing outside is part of my understanding of my Irishness. We were never engaged in political work or prisons, but there was always a feeling of being "agin," and maybe that's a stance I too quickly take, that I'm agin before I can be persuaded. There's the idea of the interest, or aliveness of being rebellious.

My husband John's father had some very dramatic memories of when he was a student at Otago University. After the First World War some of the Catholic Students Association were quite nationalistic, pro-Irish independence. They used to meet in Ma Blaney's pub in Dunedin and they used to, I suppose, drink a hot toddy or two and get a bit fiery. He was very angry, very against that because he was studying after work to be an accountant and he could see his life, his career going down the drain. At that time there were signs in shop windows for jobs "Catholics need not apply." He was a very faithful Catholic man. He used to kneel and read his missal right through all the changes after Vatican II. He was very supportive of the priesthood and tried to get a superannuation scheme in place for priests. So again there was the kind of split between what seemed the dramatic and rebellious and brave thing to do and then what was more realistic and really more sensible.

I think a lot of my creative time in my life has been about looking, just kind of intuiting, maybe alerted somehow or other to there always being other possibilities, not sort of straight looking at things, maybe clear looking hopefully, but there's always another point of view. To me the Irish attitudes, even now, must seem odd to people who haven't been invested in it. We were at a concert with the Court Jesters, and the guy was asking for words, and what word would go with something, and he said "Irish" and the guy beside me shouted out "a bomb." I kind of felt affronted, and I felt like starting a discussion... and yet I went through Omagh a couple of months before the bombing – I got to Strabane and went through in 1997, you know it was a terrible reality.

Before that Ireland had been a place in my imagination, and I finally got there in 1996/97, over that Christmas when I'd been in Iowa on the International Writers Programme. I went there on the way back. That was quite a solitary trip because I wasn't with anybody, I wasn't going to any organisation, so I could romanticise that as I liked. I could walk around in the dark areas and go to a cemetery and find the name Colhoun, Dad's mother's surname, on an old tombstone and imagine that it was maybe my ancestors, so it could contain itself imaginatively. I wrote three sonnets called "Famine." One of them is based on a sculpture by Denis O'Connor who I didn't meet until very recently, so it just seems these little things pop up in a long loop of time, even



if it's got splits in it. I quite like Sonnet Two which is about the families quarrelling in Ireland and coming out here and then the ironic conclusion that they're bringing peace to the antipodes. Anytime "Jerusalem" is sung or anytime there is some nationalistic New Zealand song like "God Save the Queen," I feel very ironic about it. I feel it's a very strange attitude that we like to think we brought peace here given what we know about the Land Wars and Parihaka and things like that.

The Christian Brothers wouldn't allow the boys to stand up for God Save the King, my father-in-law remembered that from his school days. My mother-in-law belonged to the Balmacewan Golf Club. People would say to her "Oh you'd know them because they're Doolans" and she'd come back and be so angry that she should be put in a box like that. She'd talk about "home" but home to her wasn't Ireland, home to her was England, even though she was born in Edendale, in Southland. So there was a whole lot of wanting, in some ways, to be among the elite in Dunedin who would not be Catholic. I tended to disapprove of her attitude with that, but I think I've softened and I can see now that it was hurtful to her.

When my mother died, the tradition of the wake was in our family. My father's body remained in the house for the mourning days in 1962. My sisters and I didn't go to his funeral. My mother must have made that decision. My mother whose name was Noel, lived with us for twenty years. She died on her birth night, Christmas Eve 1995, when she was 85. We woke up on Christmas morning and she had died. The family had all gathered for her 85<sup>th</sup> birthday, in Christchurch, round about our place and one of my sisters was so shocked she said she couldn't do anything about the funeral, but my younger sister and I sensed what we should do. My mother's body stayed in her flat in our house. We didn't have a priest, we had my best friend from high school; we met on the first day of high school. She's a Dominican Sister and a psychotherapist. She was our "priest." We did a sort of liturgy. Later on I wrote a poem about the family funeral. One sister put flowers in our mother's hands, I put the lace cloth over her face, another sister and John put the coffin lid on. Our daughter read a bit from a Brer Rabbit story because she and Nan had loved that. Our little nephews scattered rose petals in front as the coffin was taken from the house. There were candles and flowers in the little room throughout the previous days and we'd just go in and sit with Mum. It was very

peaceful. I played the same CD of sad Irish music over and over. I really didn't want to let my mother's body go. I wrote a sequence of sonnets, "*The Tomahawk Sonnets*," later on in 1996, they're all about her and me. They're very Irish Aotearoa New Zealand. I still love performing them with a friend who plays the Uilleann pipes.

Ireland in some ways was a disappointment in 1997, and in other ways it wasn't. A dear friend born in Ireland, Cassandra Fusco, who's art and culture editor of *Takahe*, said to me "You'll find your own famine in Ireland" which was an amazing observation, and it was true. I did make contact with some poets the last time I was there in 2007, but no one was all that interested. I knew not to go back full of a romantic hope. So there were other things which I had to dredge for that would be more meaningful, and still are, probably more earthed in a way. I don't speak any of the language of the country, but I am very drawn to it on the page and I've bought a lot of Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, the Irish poet's work. She's been a strong influence on my most recent poetry. My mother's maiden name was Niall. I loved being surrounded by the sound of Irish in Ireland. I probably feel in a way it would be more authentic for me to learn some Maori. I've done some Maori language courses though my memory is so hopeful – hopeless. Actually it is hopeful; that's exactly the right Freudian slip.

I think, from that Irish stance, maybe it is possible for the Irish to be alerted to things like the loss of land, and an uncomfortableness in feeling you are part of a dominant group. Also in the situation that you want to take from other people, which might only be forced on you, in the way the Irish and the Scots have fought for the British and the British armies, because it's the way to get a job, the way to get ahead, a way to improve things for yourself. It's quite convoluted the way that it works out.

I would have thought in earlier days, the Easter Rising in Ireland in 1916 would have been the most wonderful thing, but now I think I'm probably more circumspect. I think of politicians like De Valera, the nuns all loved him, but now when you read the terrible restrictions and the conforming that was insisted upon and the loss of power to women, I think Ireland has been really masculinist and conservative, it has been priest ridden, which would have shocked me to hear in those early days. I would have imagined priests out walking with the IRA through the streets, all this romanticism which has had to be challenged really. So I think it's been quite a major awareness of

the complexity of things and how humanity just can't be boxed into the goodies and the baddies.

I think in choosing – not choosing, I think in being chosen to write poetry – it's something I really treasure. My short stories go well then they founder, I do enjoy them, but the pleasure of getting a poem out is huge, probably more so. I think by nature I'm more like a magpie picking and picking at things. There's nothing else that really interests me to do. I think now that I'm older, I'm 66, it's as if I kind of feel I've had a life of huge engagement with people. I see that as a marvellous Irish quality. My sisters and me we all talk a lot, we all laugh a lot and are noisy, or can be, and I'm not the one who's good at telling jokes, but they're very good at telling jokes. Strangely my drinking has gone off, not that I was a heavy drinker, but now I'm a wowser as my mother-in-law would say. About a year ago all of a sudden it all tasted like turps so that's part of my Irish heritage which has gone. I'm now pure as the driven snow. But then again that's such a cliché, the Irish being drunkards and comedians.

I just feel that being engaged in life has now kind of altered. I'm not in retirement I think, I'm just in more directed hopefulness, because every day doesn't produce something by any means, but I think it's as if my efforts are concentrating now and it is the writing and the thinking and the reading that are the most important. I don't want to play bridge, golf or anything else like that. The notion of a kind of an Irish monastic life may be one of the images I have in the background, one of those little pictures you keep, the monk who is thrilled to see a bird come down to his cell so that life is engaged with nature and with the real, and also with the pagan and with the earthed, and also things above and beyond.

Going to Ireland in 2007, I've been to Ben Bulbin, I've stood at Yeats' grave and I've read at Queen's University in Belfast with [Northern Irish poet] Medbh McGuckian, surrounded by all those Northern Irish voices. One man came up to me afterwards and said that the Colhouns were fine people. But again it felt a little bit like hard work. I think I always felt like Cinderella in a way, sort of tagging along by my own desire, finding myself somewhere without the world opening up and saying "Oh welcome to Ireland." That's a bit of a famine. It is quite real. I sometimes think that poetry is for the people of the place where you are. Our language is different from

English/Irish and I'm very interested in retrieving and using New Zealand English, which would include some Maori probably, – not rampantly, only if it's really real.

I think the love of language is part of my Irish inheritance. When we were in Ireland that's what I so loved, reading the Irish Times was an absolute pleasure, hearing the people on the RTE [Ireland's national radio and television broadcaster] talking and the way they would laugh and the way they'd say "jaysus" and be so bold and blasphemous. I really loved the freedom. There's an awareness of language, and an awareness of language as being something that's alive. Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill is just huge in my life and imagination at the moment. I have a copy of her poems *The Fifty Minute Mermaid*, signed by Paul Muldoon who translated it. She writes in Irish, she's actually a scholar. She speaks Turkish and is married to a Turkish man; she speaks German, Dutch and French. She's got the most marvelous websites to look at. Her essays are all about her experience with the Irish language, they are all written in English. It's the most powerful stuff. She has found in old Irish manuscripts, in Irish myths and stories, this marvellous bold, earthed, farty kind of language, which is so brave and alive, and that's affecting my writing at the moment.

So I'm writing quite different "bad girl" poetry really and I think that that's coming from my reading of her. There's some marvellous essays in this book, about language and about how language can be lost, and even more than feminism, it's her love of Irish language, that's her dominant thing that she fights for. I think that's interesting because feminism has been a very strong thing in my life in a way, as an influence in my life in the 80s when I went to all kinds of rituals and discussions, but there are other things that can be lost, aren't there? For me it would be looking at language and feeling the loss of a language.

I think maybe from reading and having been in Ireland, I'm conscious that the energy for retrieval and for things comes from within, from within the group. I think I'm more, maybe falsely, aware of a paternalism, of someone saying "This is how they should do it," and I think that is not the right way to go.

One of the results in my own cultural life I would think from all this Irish heritage was that I was very interested in indigenous writing, so I got Joy Harjo, a Native

American Indian academic writer out to Wellington in 2011. She writes about earth and spirituality and social justice, and it was incredible to have her presence there, to have her singing and playing her jazz saxophone and singing songs of the Cherokee and the Creek/Muskogee people. I wrote a poem called “Hurunui” for her – “the heart within the heart of the land / the hand within the hand.” People wept at the Te Papa reading she gave when she read her poems about the land.

I’ve got a quotation from Nuala Ni Dhomhniail’s essays, a little line “how coolly they abandoned their language in the face of progress,” and that’s been the case, to blame Maori for abandoning their language in the face of progress. The Irish abandoned theirs, and we all do, as one language goes out or changes, things are lost. This is a little love poem that I wrote which has got that in the middle, I see that as being a reworking of an attitude which for me arises somehow from my own life but it is linked somehow with Maori and with Irish. It’s a new one which just hints at the Irish connection.

I’m trying to find a stance to say something, in this poem.

***Living out here on the plains***

*for John*

*through thick and thin*

*through storm and shine*

*my hand on your heart, yours on mine,*

*we’ll try to keep our weather fine*

*just see, the city folk will say,*

*how coolly they have abandoned*

*their language*

*in the face of progress*

What was true and is becoming clearer to me through people like Anne Salmond, is that the Irish found no problem at all with falling in love with and marrying Maori women and treasuring them. I think maybe with the Irish coming here, they were coming as part of a force they weren't in charge of and the dominant culture which was imperial wasn't really their culture. They were here as freelancers or whatever and I think it's true isn't it that many of them were very distressed to be turning Maori off their land, because they'd be very aware of what that would have been like.

This is probably a bit extreme, but I can't feel a huge pang about the Anglican cathedral in the Square. You go into that Anglican Church and - here's the Irishness coming out - it's full of war banners of victories and it doesn't seem to me that that's appropriate in a church, I don't understand it. I don't see it as part of my understanding, it doesn't touch me and I feel guilty not feeling touched enough to go out and fight and save the pile of rubble, but really it isn't alive for me. The Catholic basilica on the other hand was always a beautiful peaceful space. I wrote a series of poems to go with the Stations of the Cross that Llew Summers had carved in white stone. They were set up round the Basilica. They were controversial, the style was primitive, almost childlike but that made it all the more powerful for me. Jesus was shown naked, when the soldiers stripped him. Some people were enraged by this. I thought it was brave and honest. I felt very proud to be part of this. I felt great love for an elderly priest who donated one of the images, and admiration for the Bishop. He was on the side of art and integrity; he didn't buckle under the controversy. I felt proud that I had some feminist images in the poems and also some Maori language.

In 2007 I went to the Rathcoola, County Cork, on a writing fellowship. We went over in July and we were there for six months and that was the rainiest summer they've had for ever and ever. It was like a famine in a way. We were quite isolated in a way since the farm house was about twenty five minutes down winding rural lanes from Blarney. I know how to say Blarney with the Irish pronunciation now. The woman

who was our patron and who owned the parochial house and the estate was known as the English woman locally, so I would find myself saying “No, she’s from New Zealand.” She’d been educated in Wellington at a Catholic school, so the link was there. She loved her estate, but she didn’t get to know anybody round about, so we were quite isolated. Finally I did meet a lovely poet over there, Thomas McCarthy. It was lovely walking around the hills around Cork and the rivers, the Shournagh, the Sullane, the Lee, the Blackwater, these lovely words, the herons and the blue jays in the trees, and the two hundred year old apple orchard. There were all these things feeding into that sense of what might be Irish.

We went right around Ireland in a little Toyota Starlet with my sister and her partner and I took bus trips. I went up to Belfast on my own, getting towards Christmas, so the bus was going up in the dark finally and you see this other side the houses, all so Americanised, decorated with masses and masses of “Merry Christmas,” Father Christmas and reindeer and all these sorts of things. There’s a great boisterous kind of energy which has a link to the States and a link to France. I was really interested in the link to France. We got to Paris so cheaply from Cork. When you go around historical sites you see so much which was of the fear, as Cromwell said, of “the attack through the back door” of England – this was what they said of Ireland. So the British were always wanting to clamp down on those coming through the back door. Well I was brought up to have a hatred of Cromwell and you go around and you still hear those stories. I wrote a poem called “Cromwell” where I play on the name of the man, pretending I don’t know who he is, and the town in Central near where I was born.

I was in a woodsy area near Blarney, gone for a bit of a walk, I was looking up at the birds and an old guy said “Hello” and I said “Hello” and he said “And where are you from?” And I said “I’m from New Zealand” and he said, “You are very welcome here.” I think it comes from the Irish idiom, it’s exquisitely mannered, and I don’t think that that’s maybe being passed on to everybody who’s there. I wrote a poem about it, this old guy in the post office, who said “I thank you for your kindness” to the lady behind the counter. It might be just the same as us saying “Ta,” but it’s a beautiful turn of phrase. To my ear it’s quite a poetic turn of phrase, though I don’t know what the Irish themselves would think of it.

I'm imagining my grandmother certainly knew some Irish. She owned a series of hotels, in Central Otago, including the Bendigo, and in Dunedin. She'd started as a cook and became a very successful business woman. In fact my father-in-law knew her; he was her accountant in the 1940s. He saw me when I was just a baby. I guess that was part of being a Doolan. There's a lovely story of my mother's brother, the one who died in the war, pilot of a Stirling bomber which was shot down during a night raid on a Dunlop tyre factory in France. The family were destroyed; they never really got over it. He was working in the bar and a group of Irishmen came in. He said to his mother, "What can I say to them? Tell me something to say to them?" This is coming from my mother who was a great story teller and she loved the Irish stuff. She said, "Just go down and say 'pog mahone'." So he went down to the bar and said, "Oh well boys, 'pog mahone'," and they gave him a punch on the nose. It means "kiss me arse." We loved my mum telling us these stories. I haven't discussed it with my sisters; they may not remember. Again it was a wonderful story of trickery and laughter; that is part of that awareness, willing to take risks, willing to be a bit outrageous. I know there are nasty Irish criminals. Now when you think about the IRA you think, well they're hoodlums, and they're crooks, and they're gun runners all over Europe, it's all lost its point. I admire this marvelous movement in Belfast, Hands Across the Border. You see photos of the women who are sitting there, the less dramatic are the ones who are just working away quietly having joint efforts with education and music.

Listening to New Zealand music, David Hamilton and Richard Nunns combining with the NZ Trio, I think there's a major interweaving of sounds, and I'm hoping it will be in voices as well, in poetry: not paternalistic, not romanticised, but getting its strength from genuine conversation. They were saying when Tasman came into Murderers Bay, I think, all day his trumpeters trumpeted and all day the conch players played, it was a conversation by music. The next morning a boat load of his crewmen went ashore and they were murdered, apparently culturally a conch was accepting the challenge of the trumpet. The Maori read the music as a challenge. When the conch played and then the trumpet played that was like saying "OK guys we'll meet you tomorrow?" "Will you meet us tomorrow?" "Yes we'll meet you tomorrow." "Are you up for a fight?" "Yes we're up for a fight." Of course for the Dutch it was "we are



playing music together so we're a friendly group," and that's the most extraordinary thing.

I'm very interested at the moment and looking at what it must have been like to be say, Irish, or whatever and to have come here in the early days, people who ran away from ships and who were taken into tribes. I wouldn't want to be writing it as history. I'd rather be writing it as some kind of feeling. Because we are still trying to find our way in aren't we?

Laura Mills, journalist

*Laura Mills was born in Paisley and grew up there, just outside of Glasgow in the central belt of Scotland, Largs in North Ayrshire. She moved to New Zealand when she was 23, about twelve years ago. She and her husband Dwayne, who comes from the Coast, now have two New- Zealand- born sons, Cameron and Rory. "I was working in a children's summer holiday camp, in the south of England, when I met Dwayne who was on his OE [Overseas Experience]. I did a few summers in America as well. I bought a return ticket to come out here to New Zealand for a year."*

*On the living room wall of Laura's home in Greymouth, on the South Island's West Coast, there's a picture of a Glasgow tenement building, or "a close," a Christmas present from a friend.*

The building has a central stairwell and people would take it turns to clean the stairs. You can see into every room, it's a nosey parker picture. You don't get houses like that in New Zealand. My mum grew up in one with my grandmother, while my dad's from more of a farming area. My grandpa and gran were both poor when they grew up. My great gran, on my mother's side, had fourteen or fifteen children, I think, in a two bedroom tenement. Not all of the closes had doors on them where they meet the street, though that one does. They actually built walls in front of them during World War Two to stop the light shining on the street. There are stories of people getting drunk and walking into them. I grew up with lots of stories about these buildings. They've pulled a lot of them down now and moved people out to big high rises. The tenements weren't for the well- heeled, but they are now.

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My dad has done our family tree and we are pretty much from that central belt of Scotland right through to the west coast, back for hundreds of years. We are not Highlanders, we weren't displaced. There is a tiny bit of Irish if you go back far enough but every Scottish person has a little Irish in them. It's very urban where I'm from: everyone has been in Glasgow or Edinburgh. I think New Zealand and Scotland feel quite similar. I've worked in America and that feels very very different.

My Dad sends me CDs and I've got one called *Travis* in at the moment. I've got lots of books by Scottish writers like Alexander McCall Smith, Lewis Grassie Gibbon, Iain Banks, and Robert Louis Stevenson. I did Scottish Literature at university in my English Literature degree. I read the BBC Scotland website two or three times a week and my local weekly newspaper website, the *Largs and Millport Weekly News*. I could listen to Scottish radio streamed over the internet but I don't do it because I work as a journalist here so I need to keep up on New Zealand news. I use skype a lot to talk to family and friends.

We are not Gaelic speakers (pronounced Gah-lic for Scottish, and Gay-lic for Irish) and I don't know anyone who is. If you go up to the north of Scotland, everything is shut on a Sunday and you can't even get a ferry to the islands. It's a completely different language spoken in the north of Scotland and the Highlands. Gaelic is like Maori here. When I was growing up there were Gaelic television programmes on, like you get Maori television, government subsidised.

Since I've left they've started setting up a few immersion schools in Glasgow but that wasn't around when I was there. When I was at school we weren't allowed to use Scottish words, I don't mean Gaelic, but Scottish like *bairn* for "baby." We'd have got a row for speaking like that. We had to speak properly. The only time we were allowed to was when we did the Robert Burns speaking competitions each year. Whereas now my parents who are both teachers, are actively using those words, and children are now actively encouraged to speak that way. If my boys were in Scotland now they'd be more encouraged to use Scottish words like "a wee bairn" for a baby and having a *griest* for having a cry.

My best friend lives in Ireland, she married a Dubliner. Although she's only an hour, an hour and a half from Scotland, it's so different. They're taught Gaelic at school. When they're on a bus going through Dublin they all cross themselves.

I doesn't eat shortbread or drink whisky. I don't know anyone that does. I cannae imagine going out with my friends and taking shortbread, that would never happen. My friends would say "let's go and get some chocolate cake." I really don't know many people that drink whisky. Obviously it's popular, but that would be my dad's

generation. When our two children were born he had special whisky that he bought when we visited. When we were engaged and married he might have had a glass too.

I don't eat the terrible Scottish diet that you always read about either, like deep fried Mars Bars, which causes heart disease at 50. That's partly a poverty thing though and we were lucky to grow up in a wealthier area. In Scotland class plays such a huge part in things; you can tell so much from a person's accent and you can't do that in New Zealand. Bill Bryson writes that in his valley in Yorkshire you can even tell which side of the valley people come from. I went to St Andrews University which attracts a lot of wealthier students and you didn't have to know what someone's father did, you could tell by their accent. I don't think Scottish people ever lose their accent. We interview a lot of people for the paper here on the West Coast and people in their nineties still have their accent.

In Scotland Christmas is bigger now than Hogmanay. They used to do first footing here on the West Coast. Dwayne's parents are from the Coast and there is some Scottish if you go back far enough.

Scotland's got this strong Protestant work ethic where you are conservative, and the churches are very strict. Though it's like everywhere else now, there is a generation who use their credit card. One of my friends is a big spender on her credit card, but our other best friend cut up her credit card for her in the end. I don't know, I suppose it probably is from the poverty. I can see it on my father's side.

I'm of a generation who finds the cold hard. We got double glazing when I was eight. Offices were cold and schools were cold, Scotland is cold, but everyone lives with it. I've been to restaurants here and left after the main, because it's so cold. People say to me "you're Scottish and you should be used to it." Being cold outside I am used to it, I put on coats and scarves, but being cold inside is another thing.

When I was growing up all of Scotland voted Labour, but because Britain has a First Past the Post voting system and England voted Conservative, a Conservative government got in. There was a lot of ill feeling. Margaret Thatcher ruled Scotland, but the people of Scotland hadn't voted for her. She introduced the Poll Tax there first of all, so she was really really detested. People went to prison. There has been a lot of

resentment about being governed from England. Since I've left they've got the Scottish Parliament, and they're still pushing for a referendum on independence.

I named both our children, and in turn they took my husband's surname. They are Cameron John Dettlaff, named after a long line of John Camerons, and Rory MacPherson Dettlaff. MacPherson is on the other side, my dad's side. The Scottish name was important to me. Both birth notices called them "Scottish-Kiwis."

I got into Scottish history after I came out here. I'd like to teach the boys about Robert the Bruce and Bonnie Prince Charlie and Scotland's proud history. The Romans conquered everywhere but they never got into Scotland. It was too much for them, too cold. Again that's something they are teaching more of in Scottish schools now. We were taught a little bit of it, but we were taught a lot of British stuff. So I would like them to understand Scottish history. We had lectures at St Andrews University in buildings that were three or four hundred years old. We didn't think anything of it then. I really want the boys to understand, to go to castles and stand on the ramparts. My dad did archaeology at university and we used to look at the ramparts and pick out the old iron-age parts. I want them to do all that and look for the ploughed fields, the run rig. You'd almost call it humped and hollowed, that really distinctive shape.

I'm Scottish, not British, and the boys will definitely have Scottish passports. My Mum especially will teach them Scottish. Writing a poem when a new baby is born is a tradition in our family. My Gran wrote one when I was born, and I have it somewhere. My dad who's a published poet wrote a poem for each of our boys. Rory was born on the 21<sup>st</sup> of December.

### *Solstice*

*The coldest winter*

*For generations;*

*Arctic winds pare flesh from the bone:*

*On the shortest day I watch*

*A lunar eclipse in the north sky*

*Word of you*

*Comes like a warm airstream*

*Thawing layers of ice;*

*Your early bellows*

*The sound of glorious new life*

*You name is redolent of*

*That ocean-warmed western isle;*

*Of heather, myrtle and whisky;*

*Of people gone before;*

*Of worlds old and new (IM, 12/10)*

It's hard to tell whether there are still connections to Celtic or Gaelic traditions in New Zealand society. On the West Coast the Irish past is so mixed up with Catholicism and there are still a lot of Catholics on the coast. I'm from a strongly Protestant area in Scotland and I grew up seeing bigotry first hand, as well as the usual football violence, Rangers against Celtic. Rangers is Protestant and Celtic is Catholic. Celtic wear the colour green, which is Irish. There are things they have to crack down on like Orange Order marches. It's just rife. In Glasgow if you walked into a Celtic bar with a Rangers uniform on you'd probably get beaten up. They've been doing a lot of work on that. At the school where my mum teaches they'll take the children to the Catholic schools to try

and encourage them to engage. There were IRA bombings in Glasgow and London but they never got to Scotland.

I think people are lucky here, both sit side by side more comfortably. It's hard to imagine the hatred sitting in New Zealand. The only similarity would be the way some people speak about Maori here, brash generalisations. However, I think people are people and any isolated community like the Coast will forge its own identity. Having said that, I lived briefly in the US and the sense of humour there is very different – New Zealand feels more like home. People's lives very much echo the British life here. You do sort of see a bit of fish on a Friday.

I felt culture shock when I landed in America, I've never felt that here. In America, or where I was in California, everything is different. You walk into a supermarket and you recognise nothing for a start, the meals are quite different, apart from the strong Mexican influence. The humour is completely different. Californians are very positive. Even when they're being negative they manage to dress it positively. It's bizarre how they do it. There is not the cultural past or background to draw on. In New Zealand people still watch Coronation St and keep up with what's happening in Britain. In America we'd watch the news at night and it would just be Los Angeles.

There is a good understanding of Scotland here. At work if I say "that's expensive" they'll say "oh bloody tight Scottish." A lot of people say to me "my relatives are from Scotland," and name the place, or they'll say "I'm just back from Scotland, we did a tour around."

## *Showing the Pictures*

Kathleen Gallagher, writer and film maker

*Kathleen Gallagher is a poet, playwright, scriptwriter, film maker and is director of WickCandle Films. Established in Christchurch in 2000, WickCandle Films produces spiritual, social and environmental feature films that have premiered throughout the world. Working with Kathleen are her husband, Mike Coughlan, co-producer, editors Gaylene Barnes and Richard Lord, cinematographers Mike Single and Alun Bollinger and sound recordists Tim Brott and Makoto Takaoka. In the films, Aroha Yates-Smith composes and sings waiata and Richard Nunns and Bob Bickerton play Maori taonga puroro and traditional Irish musical instruments.*

*Her documentary, Breath of Peace/Tau Te Mauri, a collection of interviews with New Zealand peace activists, received the Sonja Davies Peace Award. Other documentaries are Healing Journeys/ He Oranga He Oranga, stories from 10 cancer survivors, Earthwhisperers/ Papatuanuku, stories of people who work to care for the earth and Waterwhispers/ Tangaroa, the experience of people who care for the country's waterways. Most recent is Sky Whisperers/ Ranginui.*

*Birdsong from outside is easily heard as we sit around the kitchen table talking.*

First of all, and more than anything else, I grew up in the tradition of Irish poetry. When I was a child, we used to have regular family parties, so in that context I was standing and reciting poems and singing from very young.

I decided when I was in my early twenties that I would be a poet. It made perfect sense inside the New Zealand Irish culture I grew up in. But in society it's not a real job. So how are you going to do that? For me there was really no question that was the most important thing to do, and for me that is still the most important thing to do, describing our circumstances here and as people on the earth. I've written poetry and plays, for stage and for radio, written books, and made films and it's all poetry.

And when things happen such as with the miners at Pike River mine near Greymouth, we sing that out too. You can talk, and talk is all right, but when you sing and make poetry and ballads, it's like singing love into the world. In Maoridom when



you speak you always sing afterwards and with my people you always sing too. I was born in New Zealand, fourth generation on my father's side, second on my mother's side. My father's side – although fourth generation – never lost contact with the people in Donegal, and members of our family continue to visit and write letters, even though my great-grandfather came here with his two brothers in 1860. On my mother's side, even though my grandfather was born there and emigrated as a child, they have no contact with the family remaining in Wicklow as they didn't keep writing letters. Because my grandfather was born in Wicklow, Ireland, prior to 1916, I and most of my brothers and sisters and cousins and children all hold Irish passports as well as our New Zealand ones. I have visited Ireland twice and stayed with our family in Donegal.

The Irish cultural connections for me have been through Irish music and poetry, through the NZ Irish Catholic celebrations, saints and feast days, in magical things, in the seen world and the unseen world. We are Irish Catholic and have all attended Catholic schools. Many of us learned Irish dancing as children and danced at monthly ceilighs, but most of all it is in the singing and poetry, the music, the prayer life, the candles, the gardening and maybe the horses. When our folk die, we bring them home to be in the casket, we make the casket, with candles around the casket, and stay with them and we have the rosary at home, until we walk them to the church before they have the funeral mass and are buried. We sing Irish songs on the way to the church and throughout the wake. Then there is always the hospitality part too. We grow and eat potatoes and roast lamb and always welcome the stranger at our tables – many people visit. No matter how you are feeling you always make them welcome, a big welcome, a warm welcome, always. I've written about the welcome in one of my poems:

*'One hundred thousand welcomes/*

*sitting here resting my bones, fed, sun/*

*cotton sheets washed white by mum,*

*hot water bottles, woollen blankets,*

*the dog, the straggler,*  
*the singer with the band, the hitch hiker,*  
*sitting here eating bacon and eggs*  
*cooked by Dad in the early morning sun.'*  
  
*(from "Twilight Burns The Sky")*

There are also those sort of magical things and the unseen world that is very real, and that all the time as Irish New Zealanders moves about inside the reality we are describing. Dad would get us to all to lie down on the ground and watch the clouds:

*The clouds tails, unfolding giant whales,*  
*sea urchins, crimson kings,*  
*wild wild women with their hair flying heaven ward.*  
  
*You talk, Dad, with tui and blackbirds,*  
*magical birds that appear and reappear at times of portent.*  
  
*Banshees wail, white and grey rabbits upset carriages*  
*before someone dies, you give away brand new shoes*  
*if someone says they wish they had a pair.*  
  
*You follow the line of fairy rings up the hillside.'*  
  
*(from "Twilight Burns The Sky")*

For us the world is not a boring place, it is a magical world. There's an unworldliness as well as an other worldliness that permeates our whole psyche. It's a holiness that's full of holes. It's quirky and colourful, and people who aren't us, I think they sort of want it. It's given to us and it's a blessing that we have. I think there is that magical reality permeating everything. This is where I come from and this is the background that informs me. We would go on our family trips and all sorts of things happened on our trips around the South Island with Mum and Dad.

*I remember once Dad watching a great meeting of seagulls,*

*hundreds of gulls high on the side of a cliff,*

*seals sitting on black rock gazing far out to sea,*

*singing of snow capped mountains,*

*seaweed, sand and sky and of their love.'*

*(from "Twilight Burns The Sky")*

My great-aunt, who never lived in Ireland but was brought up on the West Coast of the South Island, could still speak her prayers and count in and talk Irish when she was 92 years old. I have felt a more pressing need to learn Maori than Gaelic, as I was born here and have lived out my life here and Maori is at great risk of disappearing – if we don't speak New Zealand Maori here, New Zealand Maori will not be spoken.

My attitude to my Irish connection has deepened and broadened with writing the book *The Gallaghers of Cronadun* about our family and their descendants, having Gallagher family reunions on the West Coast at Cronadun, a small village just north of Reefton, and going to Ireland and being with our people there and visiting the River Finn and our mountains there in Donegal. *The Gallaghers of Cronadun* was compiled first with my father. Then after my father died I did another edition with two of my cousins and brought it up to date. Our family that came from Donegal, three brothers

came out, set up a business in Cronadun, just north of Reefton, where they had a hotel, a store and a post office. There were a lot of Gallagher descendants who married other Irish people, and there was also intermarriage with Cornish, Germans, Jews and with many folk of Maori descent from iwi throughout the country, and English and Scots and Dutch.

In my earlier experience with, for example, the University Maori Club, when you went onto a marae, usually the biggest groups of non-Maori people there were Irish and Scottish. They're Celtic, they're at home, it makes sense to them, it's not a big jump. Sleeping on a marae, living on a marae, staying on a marae, just being there, the whole thing makes sense, honouring the old people and caring for the young ones. Between Maoridom and the Celts I think there's not a big distance there. When Dad's cousin, Fr. Austin, who was 70 years old, came from Donegal, we took him up to our cousins in Nelson, to the marae there to Ben Hippolyte and his family. We took Fr. Austin on and he was welcomed onto the marae, had some kai and came away and he said to me and Dad, "The Maori are just the same as us Irish." For me there is not a big leap in New Zealand from Celtic to Maori spirituality because those are the two peoples that pray here. They experience the unseen and they watch for signs and they try and understand. They have visions to see where to move next and where to put weight and where to take your weight away from. They know how to work together as a community. They know how to hold and how to be held.

When I first started writing poetry, I wrote a poem called "Tara." I read it at the Christchurch Polytechnic and Keri Hulme, who had also written a poem called "Tara," was reading on the same day, and neither of us knew we had both written these poems. Tara was where one of my great grandmothers comes from. Also in Maori it means the first light of dawn, and it was one of the first books I had written. Keri came up to me later and said, "Are you Irish or are you Maori? You can only be one of them."

I am a poet, playwright and film maker and my New Zealand Irishness is an integral part of my work and cosmological and theological understanding of the world, what we create in the world and how we are part of the world. The films I have made recently are calling up the voices of New Zealand people who speak across worlds and

spiritual worlds, and bring those spiritual things into reality. They are courageous people with vision, unafraid to respond.

My cosmology and theology is related to my education with Irish nuns – pre-Vatican II up to the end of primary school, then I went to Villa Maria [College in Christchurch] post-Vatican II. The thing that permeated my education was not so much what came out of Rome but the NZ Irishness of my education. New Zealand Catholicism, in my experience of it, is creation-based spirituality, that's its strength. Creation-based spirituality is that everything has its own mauri, everything sort of breathes, you can listen to trees and birds and fish. It's not a people-centred way of looking at the world; the earth is breathing. Columnist Tahu Potiki said today in the *Press*, “Kua oho te whenua” – “the earth is waking up.” It makes perfect sense inside the creation-based theological way of looking at the world.

I think my education at school was affected by the idea of social justice, influenced by the Vietnam War protests. The head teacher of my school went on the last march to pull New Zealand out of Vietnam. My schooling was very politically conscious and politically active. We never felt disempowered. We felt we could change the world, improve the world, make things better. In my early childhood a lot of the songs we sang were about the British Crown, about the people who had been killed by the British Crown. The old ballads that the Irish scholar gypsy musicians would sing around Ireland were the only way folk got to know of what had happened as they couldn't use newspapers to tell their stories. There was a political thread, a distrust of the government, a distrust of the British and of the army, of the military, that permeated my consciousness.

When we were kids we used to go down to the cinema in Riccarton, and everyone used to stand up when they played “God Save the Queen” at the beginning, except for us. We would sit across the row with our arms crossed because my grandfather would turn in his grave if we sang that. He and his family left Ireland in 1890 before the Easter Rising in 1916. I hold an Irish passport through him, my mother's father, Daniel, so I could live there if I wanted. But Te Wai Pounamu where I was born, is my island, my turangawaewae. When I was younger, in my twenties, I never went to Ireland. I didn't go there till I was 50, because I thought if I went there I might never be able to leave

and I didn't want to do that. I want to live here. I love this place, this island and these mountains, beaches, rivers, forests.

I think there are behaviours in New Zealand and in the Kiwi psyche that can be linked to Celtic or Gaelic roots. There are kindness and hospitality to strangers, love of nature, love of horses, inventiveness, creativeness, composing songs, writing, film making, art, and doing business. Kindness and hospitality to strangers, I think is a very important part of Celtic society and that's how I was brought up. Anybody and everybody who walks across the threshold, you feed them, you clothe them, you put them up. We always have extra beds in our house; my mother had them in her house. We have about six extra mattresses here. How could you not, really? That's just how you live. But I know in some societies it's not like that. I saw a French guy on the train the other day and I said, "You can come and stay at our place." He was really surprised. I don't think, especially in the South Island, folk even blink at that – of course you can come and stay at our house. Maybe it's the pioneer thing too, if someone turns up you help then. Love of the outdoors, of nature, that's probably more of a thing for the South Island and North Island of New Zealand, because of our amazing climate. With the Irish a lot of people were farming or fishing, that was how they lived, so it was an integral part of their lives and also the houses were small.

The Irish have an intense passion for the land. When Ireland was going through its Celtic Tiger stage, they were busy buying up land all over Europe. When I went to Ireland and went to the place where Dad's family were from before the British took over, the only thing they still held there was the urupa. The cemetery was inside a fallen down monastery, but the church and the presbytery had been taken by the Anglicans. Everything else had gone and they still haven't got it back. The land, the whole of west Donegal, is the very poor part where the Catholics were forced to live and in east Donegal in the wealthy part is where the Protestants have land.

I think Irish are good business people, there is the creativity and composing and the love of the horses. I think in a way we are freer here than the people are in Ireland. They are repressed in a way, so we are really blessed in a way that we have grown up out here. It is wilder here, and the trees are wilder and I think people are wilder too, in a way. There is a better climate here, which makes a difference. We don't have lot of rock

around, we have so many trees. Over there they have lost so many trees, so many fish and so many birds. We've got this incredible vibrancy here. New Zealand is profoundly affected by Maoridom: Maori language and Maori perception, Maoritanga.

When I first went to Ireland, I was 50. They had just made peace in Northern Ireland. They were revisiting the Flight of the Earls.<sup>1</sup> They were marching through Donegal just when we got there. My father's family, the Gallaghers, were among some of the Earls that fled in the 1600s from the north. It was good to go there when the peace had been made. I realised when I was there, I was intensely from here, Te Wai Pounamu, the South Island of New Zealand. I was a New Zealander of Irish Catholic descent, my descendants from County Donegal and Country Wicklow.

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<sup>1</sup> Flight of the Earls, 4 September 1607, footnote to be completed

### Malcolm Adams, master carver

*A bone carving done by master carver, Malcolm Adams, has Mananan, the Celtic sea god on one side, and Tangaroa, the Polynesian sea god on the other: One eye is baltic amber, the other is 45 million-year-old Kauri gum out of the Kamo coal mine. He describes it as representing Southern Celtic people. A founding members of the Panakareo Co-operative Society, he set up Kohukohu Carvers in an unused school building in Kohukohu, in the Hokianga, after deliberation and discussion with local kaumatua and priests. He taught carving around the area for some years. He shifted to Auckland in the early 90s where he began designing and casting in metals and also became involved in photography.*

I basically see myself as a Southern Celt, a South Pacific Celt. The way I look at it, as the Celts came across Europe they could've picked up influences of different cultures. In a sense if I didn't reflect a certain Polynesian influence in my work it would mean I was insensitive. Maori people will come in and see my work and say it's very Maori and people who come straight from England look at it and say it's pure Celtic. I like to see it as a mixture of both.

I've Dewars, whiskey manufacturers and traditionally high priests of Scotland on one side and I've got McGintys on the Irish side. McGintys were tinkers or so they tell me. My grandmother on the McGinty side, my maternal grandmother, had a big influence on me. When the McGintys went to Scotland they called themselves McKenty because it sounded more Scottish. And I've got Nicols and Adams on sides of the family.

I was born in New Zealand up in the far North in a settlement outside Kaitaia called Pukepoto and educated at a Maori school there. When I was growing up the Mungamuka Gorge was still a one-way metal road. It was an isolated community. People would go to Auckland twice a year. I started being taught to carve when I was seven years old by an old Dalmation gum digger who lived up the back of my parent's farm. I used to take the *Herald* up to him about two miles every night. He started me off carving Kauri gum and also taught me to spear Kauri gum. There's still a lot up there. I like to utilise Kauri gum though it is one of the most difficult mediums to work in, one



mistake and that's it, even the heat of the saw will melt the gum. It's not like working in amber which doesn't shatter very easily. I mostly work in naturally found materials native to New Zealand such as native wood, bone, paua and other shells, kauri gum, as well as in wax for castings in bronze, silver, gold and pewter.

This was my training bible (*opening a thick book of sketches used when teaching carving*). You see that "eight" there, the figure eight is well-balanced, what you do is develop it, for instance here working with three eights together. As you develop it you see how it can change. This is like Celtic knot work, all the way through, continually developing it.

When I got down and talked to my students, most of them were Maori, they would acknowledge their Scottish or Irish ancestry, because most of them do have Scottish and Irish ancestry. That design was one of the Gaeltacht tee-shirts one year. Most of these I've made at some stage in wood and bone.

When my children grew up and left home, I decided it was time for me to do something different. So that's why I came down to Auckland. Where I lived up north was very isolated, it was two kilometres to my nearest neighbor, so when my children were away at school I could go for two weeks and not see anybody. I still find crowds difficult to deal with.

When I came to Auckland I did a lot of work in silver and gold and pewter and a range of jewellery, ear rings and rings. In bone everything is a one off. Once you get into metal production you make the master, the original, then you can mass produce. I transferred the same methods across. I had some Scandinavian people visit me in my workshop and they looked at one of the pieces and said "it's pure Viking." So much similarity across cultures.

At an earlier stage I wanted to go back to Scotland, to work there for a year and carve there under those influences. Basically going back to Scotland I would have been taking the new things that we've learned through living in the South Pacific. All these things add to the art. As I get older I doubt I will ever go to Scotland, because basically there are more interesting countries I'd like to visit. I spent some time recently in China, about three months. I found the history completely fascinating.

In Tian Jian, quite close to Beijing, an area where all the Europeans settled, at the end of an evening, a social evening, they play Auld Lang Syne. My Chinese wife never knew where it came from, she thought it was a Chinese song. It has become part of their tradition, she didn't even know there were actually words to it because they just play the music.

I visited Taiwan where the original inhabitants were Polynesian ancestors of the Maori. Originally a coastal people, they were pushed back up into the mountains. I went and visited some of these villages, and their weaving and art work you would have sworn came from South America, the same patterns coming through. You see that too with Maori pattern making. I suppose when you are weaving it's like a mosaic, you build up patterns. A lot of those patterns get transferred into 3-D later on, artists borrow them from the weavers and you see that in both cultures.

I always acknowledge my Scottish and Irish sides as being a very important part of me but my attitude has softened a little from the time when I was attending the Gaeltacht and was more involved in the whole Celtic thing. I think to a certain extent people who go to the Gaeltacht and get heavily involved in cultural societies in Auckland do so as a reaction to the Treaty of Waitangi and this modern political correctness. So often we're told Pakeha don't have a culture, yet they have a very rich culture.

My sister Heather has done a family tree. One of the things that showed up in the family tree that was really interesting was the inter-generational violence that occurred. For instance my grandfather left home at 13 because of the violence from his father. My grandfather was the oldest son so he would've inherited the farm, but it was the violence at home that drove him away. He was a champion marksman. Basically it was his prize money won at shooting that allowed him to come to NZ and buy a farm

We were talking to one of the old aunts who said it was quite a big family, you'd be serving up dinner at the table and he'd give you a punch in the arm. She'd say to him "what was that for?" he'd say "because I felt like it." My dad was very much the same. He'd been on the receiving end of it. My brother and I often talk about it. It's not until this generation that we've been able to break the cycle. I think generally you find the

more educated a person is, they tend to think about things first. My brother was the first one to go to university in the family. I was working in the freezing works at fifteen. It seems to have been an intergenerational cycle for our family, and that's something Maori people seem to be going through at present.

I don't think that the average Kiwi is particularly interested in Gaelic or Celtic traditions. Most kiwis are fourth or fifth generation, so we've been away from Europe a long time.

My grandmother and mother always referred to Scotland as home. I never thought that. My grandfather was a coal miner in Glasgow, and I often think that if he hadn't got up and left I'd be an unemployed Scot. There's not a day goes by that I don't thank god I was born in New Zealand and not somewhere else. We are incredibly lucky. I've seen the poor people in China, for instance.

My Mum would start crying when she heard Danny Boy, but each generation moves further and further away. You do see so many funerals where they have a piper. We had one at my mother's funeral. My son is vaguely interested but it's not an important part of his life. My sister does the family tree. My wife who is Chinese loves the bagpipes and Scottish dancing, it's foot tapping with catchy jigs and reels. I haven't been to a ceilidh for a long time. For those who are interested it gives them a sense of self. A Scottish friend of mine came to New Zealand and joined the Scottish Society. She used to go to dances and ceilidhs, which she said she wouldn't have done in Scotland. You get the different societies in Auckland, the Dutch and the French for example holding onto a little bit of tradition and self-identity.

Colonisation and the clearances forced people out of Scotland, but when they arrived in New Zealand they identified with the Maori tribal system, more than an experience of colonisation. That's why so many Scots married into Maori society. Up North you get Campbells and MacLeans, all big Maori families.

Maori and Scottish and Irish societies are very close. They both kept moving; the Irish and the Scottish right to the edge of Europe and Polynesians kept moving from island to island across the Pacific. Both were tribal or clannish and a lot of their customs are very similar. When you look back at the ancient Celts and their religion there are

similarities with Maori traditions as both are based a lot on trees, and some of the legends run almost parallel. Celts considered it a great honour to bury their dead, they used to take bodies back to a home area. A lot of the designs come from nature and it is very difficult to know sometimes when something is more Maori than Celtic.

I was talking to a Maori lady one day and she said one of the reasons the family didn't do well at school was her grandmother was brought up in a nikau whare with a dirt floor. I told her that my grandmother came out of a black house in Scotland with a dirt floor, a fireplace and one tiny little window. Because your grandmother grew up in a nikau whare it doesn't mean you can't be successful in life. Using past grievances as an excuse not to succeed is not acceptable. You see the same thing in Taiwan and in Canada where tribal people who had a stronger culture move in on them, they lost the bonds that hold them together, land and traditions, communities fractured.

Denis O'Connor, sculptor, visual artist

*On the cover of the book accompanying Denis O'Connor's exhibition, What the Roof Dreamt, his younger son, Emmett, stands in for his father. Emmett is photographed standing on the roof of a house, looking out into the distance, just as Denis did as a child in the 1950s. He would stand on the roof of his family home, in the Auckland suburb of Glen Innes, looking out to the Waitemata Harbour, watching freight and passenger liners going out to sea, "wondering where overseas was."*

*Denis was the first to take up the Rathcoola residency, near Cork in Ireland, which was set up to acknowledge Irish influence in New Zealand arts. He did much of the work for What the Roof Dreamt there in 2005. Of the 37 works that made up the exhibition, 30 slate roof tiles formed the major component. Based on Waiheke Island, he has worked with a variety of materials and techniques, including ceramics, and later with stone, limestone and slate.*

*The Waitemata harbour is blue and calm on the way to Waiheke Island where Denis collects me from the ferry. The sound of cicadas fills the air as we sit out on the verandah overlooking an inlet and talk.*

My father was almost thirty when he came to New Zealand. He transmitted kind of migration stories vividly. I always say he never really landed here. As a child, for years I did not understand where he was talking from. It didn't seem to be the world around us at that point in time. I understand that people talk from an internal landscape. The last thing we did together the day before he died was saw wood together with a double ended sword, hence that image of a double ended sword above the fireplace in my living room.

As an artist I started making art works about where he might possibly be talking from and that might be about some internal landscape. That was before I'd been to Ireland myself. When I was Hodgkins Fellow at Otago University in 1985 and I spent a lot of time in Central Otago something was absolutely a dam overflowing, because I recognised the landscape in Central Otago as the internal landscape that he was speaking from. My father came from a part of Ireland that was quite barren, and this land clearly represented it in my mind. So this unleashed a body of work over three

decades: just that realisation, that I finally understood my father was actually talking from his native landscape, not the New Zealand landscape.

He came from County Kerry in the south west, from a very staunch, republican, politicised family. His family were variously implicated in the Troubles, their house was a safe house. He probably actually had to come to New Zealand. He never explained it fully, but myself and my brother suspect that. He was placed briefly in the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, then he deserted three months later, got back to Ireland and was loaned the money to come to New Zealand, a place he knew nothing about. A lot of his family went to Chicago and New York. None of them came here. We figured it was the furthest place from England.

He came here when he was 29 or 30 with an enormous amount of political opinions and was seriously anti-British. He came in 1939 six weeks before World War Two was announced. All the men of his age were called up, but he refused. Very clearly he did not want to go back there because he was running. They tried to get a vessel to take Irish migrant citizens back to Ireland, but there was nothing available, so they were put down the Huntly coal mines for pretty much the period of the war. He spent his first three years in the mines until he orchestrated an accident to get out of there.

We were brought up with strong working-class politics, and even though we were church goers my father was very, very anti the clergy. He understood the tyranny they had ruled villages with in Ireland. In a way I always regarded that as an incredibly positive experience as a devout young Catholic boy. My mother was a convert and hence infatuated with the whole thing, but my father put things in perspective, because my experience with the local Irish Catholic priests was very negative. He re-affirmed for me the man on the altar was a representative of God and then every moment after that he was a fucker. There was no confusion in my mind.

I grew up knowing all that, in a very politicised family, with a good understanding that all this nonsense the church tried to lay on you, you could take it or leave it. It gave me a clear understanding of the conflicts that some of my Catholic friends had, but that I never had. So I thank him for that. Early on I made quite a lot of works to do with Catholicism always informed by the balances, what to retain and what to deny. I clearly

retain the theatre of postwar Catholic Latin ritual which was mesmerising and wonderful. I was an altar boy so I was up close and friendly. All the rest of what I consider to be trivia, all about heaven and hell, I let go of quite soon.

He died suddenly and I was able to buy this house. I didn't know what to do with his life savings, I felt so guilty inheriting it, myself and my brother. I had two little babies at the time so I threw the money at this house. In a sense he gave me the stability I've had for 40 years with this house.

I've tackled an enormous range of subjects and I'm represented in most of the museums in New Zealand and I've done a lot of works for cities around the country. In the first big survey show I did in 1993 in Wellington at the Dowse Art Museum I remember saying to somebody who interviewed me, it would be interesting to have shown my father around the exhibition. It covered 7 years from 1985 to 1992 and a lot of the works were specifically dealing with unresolved issues he had about his migration and exile from his roots. I like to think he would've been pretty proud, but I do know he would've said to me: "When are you going to get a real job?" I suppose it gives me a good understanding of don't get too big for your boots, don't think you've got the measure of everybody, because some of the subjects you're tackling hit people in rather sensitive places.

When I was young Irish Gaelic was used around the table, words like "bread" and "salt," and I used these words in work I made in the 1980s. I got a map of the midnight sky and named the constellations in Gaelic. At the moment I'm using the Gaelic alphabet. I was lucky to be the first generation, I saw Ireland through his eyes. I've always tried to make my work quite provocative politically and to do with social and cultural histories. I suppose growing up with a really good understanding of what's right and what's wrong just carried through to my art work.

Your question about Maori, and the experience of colonisation, is quite core because my youngest daughter has married a Tainui boy and I have three black grandchildren from a very respected Tainui family in Tuakau, south of Auckland. All have Tainui given names. That chimes with my father's first observation of New Zealand after he got out of the mines. He worked briefly for the Americans in their

warehouse, where he met my mother, then joined the new union after the 1951 waterfront dispute. There were a lot of Maori on the waterfront. There is a family refrain that my brother remembers very clearly: My father always said “New Zealand, smug little patch of England, the only saving grace is Maori people.” For someone to say that in 1951 against the mainstream opinions of the time, that saw Maori as a dying race, I think clearly shows his insight into what Maori represent to this country. They are the holders of some of the most important things about this country, and he saw that in 1951. I think he’d be immensely proud that he now has three Maori great-grandchildren.

I’m probably one of the few Pakeha artists who has been invited to decorate the front of a Maori meeting house. I had a chance to do the front of the Ngati Kuri house in Kaikoura, when Ngai Tahu were claiming their territorial rights. Tipene O’Reagan invited six Pakeha artists to help create the house, Takahunga.

I got a chance on that occasion to talk to the Maori film crew who were following us. They wanted to know what my first contacts with Maori were and I was able to tell them how it was. I grew up in Glen Innes. It was rough, there was a lot of crime. I was involved with it and so were my Maori friends. We went out stealing on Saturday night, but on a Sunday I’d go to the Auckland Museum and look at the artefacts in the glass cases and I couldn’t find any point of connection. I remember the film crew being thrilled that someone had the balls to say it like it really is. Quite often in a situation like that, sitting in front of a meeting house, you will praise the Maori culture, but I came from what I think is a perspective that is true and real to life in New Zealand.

I say that my father’s affirmation of Maori culture was an important part of my upbringing because I saw the bad side of it, the violence and the alcohol but I understood the beauty of where they came from as well. His acknowledgement helped me move forward in all of that. People from an Irish or Scottish background might know what it’s like to be victimised. I think this really helped to inform my work with a deep respect for what Maori stand for.

With the meeting house I was dealing with it on a very formal level on a marae. Some of the people on the marae did not want Pakeha involved so I felt the conflict



within the iwi who lived there as well, and we had to deal with that. I was able to be straight up and honest. They let me name the house. I think that was an enormous honour for a Pakeha.

A lot of my work explores the overlay of social histories with personal histories, so I suppose thematically that's where the layers of ideas in my work intersect, where the broad social histories of a nation interact with the personal histories, which might be in conflict with those social histories. For example they wanted my father to fight for New Zealand and he said, "No way, forget that." Fundamentally, I think that is my responsibility as an artist, to really understand that these things are moving like shifting plates constantly, and culture evolves out of it. I think a lot of my work has been helping to define what this culture might be all about, just broadly, not blowing my own trumpet. I simply feel the responsibility for defining it truly, or the facts as I see them, the information that I have and the experiences I've had.

Going back to Ireland, my first trip was in 1988, funded from Creative New Zealand, I was also able to go down to where my father grew up, and met his younger brother, the only surviving member of the family. I thought he was dead but I met him. It was a very powerful experience. I've visited Ireland quite a few times, since then.

My oldest daughter, Blaze, picked up the baton. She did her masters at the University of Auckland. She loved hand drawing and worked on her MA supervisor's site up in Hawaii. He wanted her to learn satellite mapping skills. She then headed off to Britain, where she worked at the British Museum for a while, but ended up doing a doctorate in Ireland and became very much a part of academic life in Dublin, for fifteen years.

Blaze's conceptual thinking and her methodologies have been remarked on. When she first started giving papers at conferences around Europe she was treading on the territory of already existing academics. They were out to get her. She said it would rear its ugly head at question time, where they would want to make her look stupid. She was this gorgeous blond from the other side of the world treading on their turf. But she won every last one of them over, over a period of ten years with the conceptual, imaginative thinking and the methodology that she brought to it. She did have a few aids, she was a

satellite mapping specialist as well, so she had a few tools that the old school, the guys who had written the books didn't have. But I know from my conversations with the staff at University College Dublin and some of the guys from Cambridge and Oxford who were at this conference, they had adopted her methodologies. What better than that? The World Archeological Congress, in memorium page, is full of academics saying how wrong it all was that she died.

My daughter Blaze, an archeologist, researched sites up the north of Scotland and in Ireland. Her territory was quite broad, all done by similar kinds of people, Neolithic 6,000 BC. We did a road trip in 2008 when she took us to see some of her sites. It was a select group of 12 of us, in a minibus, including Gerard O'Reagan, a Ngai Tahu rock art specialist she knew from Auckland University. He is the one who has been chosen to take up the baton of rock art in New Zealand which has been a very underrated area of Maori art. She took us to a number of sites up in Monaghan up on the Irish border, down through some passages, through tombs. We did a road trip back through Wales to look at the national Slate Museum, since I've been very involved with recycling slate in my art works. I spent a couple of weeks with her based in Leicester, where her husband is a Ryan Air flight trainer.

A month later I got a phone call from her from a site up in northern Scotland, in the Orkney Islands. She said she was in a bed and breakfast and discovered a big lump. She went to the village doctor and he said she better go back to Leicester where they scanned her. Within 24 hours she called and said, "they don't want to call it cancer" but it was a definite possibility. Then she was diagnosed: They gave her between two and five years to live and she lasted nine months. It was a rogue intestinal cancer cell. It was rampant the doctors said. It was very rare; she was a healthy girl. She came to New Zealand and spent a little bit of time here, thought she was getting better, went back to Britain and died quite quickly.

Auckland University has created an award in her honour and her PhD has come out as a book. Blaze has been honoured by University College Dublin. They planted a pohutukawa tree outside her office and a work of mine has been gifted work to the university. My daughter completed a circularity of life. She is a unique example of how the "New World" informs the "Old World" in ways people could never have dreamed.

We shared a project together, which involves a documentary as well as a book and a major exhibition. It's kept me burrowing away, and I'm about to go to Ireland and do some filming in September on a documentary. I'm four years into the project called *The Tangler* and looking at the end of 2013 to complete it. The project was stimulated by a couple of papers Blaze gave at an international archeological conference, in 2007, attended by about 1,700 archeologists from around the world. There were two days devoted to the Francis Bacon studio, which my daughter was involved with. Born in Dublin, Bacon became probably the greatest painter of the twentieth century. He lived in London, died in 1982 and then there was a 15-year-long legal battle about the ownership and the contents of the studio. It was resolved by the gifting of the entire studio to the Dublin Art Museum. They were going to build a new wing to house it, but they needed to think through how to go about shifting this room, absolutely full of debris and faithfully rebuild it. They employed a team of archaeologists for three years, which my daughter was employed on, to do a survey on the studio, then rebuild it in Dublin. It created international attention and during this conference there was a two-day symposium on that specifically. Blaze gave the keynote paper, called "Dust and Debitage." She used the model of my studio here on Waiheke, which is like an archeological site with layers and layers. The Bacon studio is now a leading tourist attraction in Dublin.

In our talks surrounding her papers, seeing the studio itself, and something of her subsequent published material, I decided to embark on a project that took the artist in his studio as the subject, one of the great subjects in art history tradition. I'm 32 works down the track now and quite a body of writing. We've got the team for the book in place: Damien Wilkins from the Arts and Letters Institute at Victoria University, Bill Manhire's associate, and Giselle Baker, an art historian from Auckland, and the design team. I'm looking for funding to get that happening this year.

Initially I thought it would be rather boring to picture myself in the studio personally, so I was casting around for a stand-in for myself in the studio, which I came across in my Rathcoola scholarship near Cork in 2005. I was the inaugural recipient of that fellowship, spending eight months working on a project. I did a huge amount of research while I was there and came across that figure called the tangler, usually a male,

who hangs around horse sales. He has no official designation at the fair, but he observes what's going on between the seller and the buyer of the horse. When there's no deal done he approaches each individual party and will broker a deal, for a wee fee. I decided I really loved the idea that this figure was an intermediary, because that's how I see myself. I thought this was the perfect figure in Irish social histories who could take the weight of the questions and answers I want my artist in the studio to ask himself. So I created this human, male figure, who wears a horse mask. It captures something of the theatre of art, the drama of it, and the mythological dimensions of the artist.

I'm always interested in regional histories and provincial histories and I was quite interested in this figure because we grew up in Auckland with a lot of horse racing and gambling. We were taken to race meetings constantly. My father sometimes saw us as wise children who could somehow predict the winning horse. He'd take us to the birdcage before races, looking for any sort of sign that we had transmitted from the horse. I've made quite a few works to do with the horse, which is important to the Irish.

I've been working for four years with this figure and I've had two shows which have put that figure out there, so it now has a foothold in the culture. Just yesterday I embarked on stage three of this five or six year project. I have been involved with the tangle figure in a show that toured Cuba, Mexico and Spain last year, so he's out there. And a show which toured New Zealand, *Diaspora*. It fitted perfectly, it's my life. I'm represented by Two Rooms gallery in Auckland. I've done three solo shows with them and published a book with them

The conversations I had with Blaze are very powerfully resonating in this project. I feel like I want to honour it as superlatively as I can, because it was a project she initiated by her own writing. It's been challenging, deeply rewarding, possibly not a subject I would have tackled but I'm giving it my all. The last show which I had last year, I had a text on the wall with fresh leaves from her birth tree, here at my house on the island, put there every day while the show was up. I don't hesitate to bring her into the picture as collaborator on this project.

She never met my father but Maurice O'Sullivan, head of Archeaology at UC Dublin, who was introduced to me on two occasions, comes from the same area that my

father came from and Blaze described him as the grandfather she never knew, so there's a nice interconnectedness there. She was very conscious of the places she took me to look at in Ireland, that these had resonances with her childhood here on Waiheke Island. We are talking about one of those very imaginative intelligences, where the child can teach the adult, the parent. That was going on with three or four of my trips with her in Ireland. She would take me to a place, but she wouldn't explain it. She would know I would very quickly understand the imprint of some aspect of her life here on the top of that site. That's what I marveled at. I suppose she absorbed my sensibility as she was growing up in my studio here. Crawling around she was fascinated with dust which I've created quite a lot of. She became one of the world authorities on dust as an archeological material. So there was just a brilliant conversation going on with her research and her learning about where it might have located itself in her childhood. She said her childhood inspired some of her breakthroughs in thinking and research over there. I just think it is so rare for three generations of a family to be so intimately connected in all the disciplines, socially, intellectually and creatively. I'm lucky. I see myself as being in the middle, uncharacteristically of a generation that has departed, namely my daughter and my father, so they have both left a legacy, as a centre of that trinity that informs my work so potently.

Essentially since 1985 I've been using your questions as questions to myself a lot. I do a lot of writing to curators who write about my work. I've got voluminous correspondence in my archive, so there is a body of already existing writing about what I'm doing. I knew what my task was from the word go. I've had five children, and I'm still doing it. Because I've always lived in this house, everything that comes here and goes out of here is known. I started copying letters about two decades ago because when you write a 12 page letter you actually need a copy of it. Now I can go back to a letter when someone questions something about a work. It's been quite invaluable to people writing about my work. In that sense I'm very aware of what I'm doing as an archive to the culture. I approached the Auckland City Art Gallery a few weeks ago about leaving my archives with them. They've got eight works of mine in their collection so they were interested. So I guess you've landed with someone who's been living, breathing what you're on about.

I often get very moving letters from people who have seen my work in shows I've done around the country. Even though I don't try to eliminate the enigma and mystery in my work I do know that an image is an image because it is coded with everything I wanted it to be, and it's surprising how it gets transmitted to people. I can think of numerous occasions when people have written to me or sought me out because a work is so potent. I know that what I'm doing is important for that reason. I can't believe I've managed to pull off the task I said "yes" to, and I've managed to support myself and bring up a family. I think I've got my father to thank for giving me base one.

I can trace everything I do in my art work to an experience, a conversation, a landscape, an attitude, an opinion – that's why I do a lot of writing about my art work. There are narratives and experiences in layers, so I list all those on an art work, on the reverse side so that in the years to come there will be no confusion about where it all came from.

I suppose I am a little bit of a social historian. A lot of people involved in the visual art culture in New Zealand consider what I do almost unprecedented because I am a visual artist who has got a very literate understanding of what they are doing. In my translation work with poets they are always completely wrapped that I have found an image that they couldn't have possibly found in their text. I get marvelous letters from writers happy that someone has noticed what they do and also I've dived deep enough into it to find an image. It's very rewarding having a facility in both areas.

I think I've been given a gift, a little bit like the Selkies, in the tradition whereby you can live in different mediums, I see that playing itself out in my life. I'm a deeply intuitive person and very obviously reading some of the great Irish writers has really propelled me competently forward. When I went to Otago University and discovered Central Otago I was reading Seamus Heaney then. I've pretty much read everything he has ever written. I identify with his imaginative world and the way he understands the weight of ordinary things as well, he has a deep unconscious imagination. But he is also a realist, he understands things on tables, the value of a few words. So reading artists like him really confirmed a lot of instincts that I have. I've made a lot of works from Heaney poems and I've done a lot of Beckett works. I was never a great reader but

suddenly discovering this whole archive that I could so feel, it wasn't just intellectual, it was the feeling of what they were about as well, really helped me at that time.

I have to deal with some conflicting situations at times, involved with doing public art works. There have been occasions when the IRA rebel has been screaming and shouting inside of me when I'm having to deal with people I would rather not have to negotiate with. I suppose slowly over the years I've seen that my father was pretty staunch but I am as well, I'm much more at home in the culture than he was because I've lived here. It's not surprising that whenever he came up against authority he would absolutely be hostile to it, whereas I've learned to negotiate at times. But I still feel the privilege of wealth is not right, all the things I grew up with, and that is essentially what was transmitted to me by my parents, my father particularly. And that's good because I can stand up to people. I've done it a few times. They've been quite shocked that an artist who should be quite grateful for anything that's thrown their way can actually be staunch enough to say "I don't think I want to take a part in this project." I've always had the strength to do that and it's simply what I learned from my father. It's "you know what you stand for and stand up for it."

As you age you go through different understandings of situations, for example when one examines the life of those two people you call your parents, you can go through various reactions to both parties. In my case I've had to come to grips with what my mother gifted me and what my father gifted me. My mother interestingly enough was illegitimate. She was born in Christchurch, her mother had been divorced from her husband. My grandmother had left from Cork, and I've done works imagining the six week trip on the *Rangitane*. She had teenage children and suddenly this forty something woman got pregnant to a man who was her tailor. With no visible father in sight, they were forced to leave town, and my mother grew up in Victoria Park, a working-class part of Auckland. She was told a pack of lies about her father. She was essentially brought up by her older brothers. Her father was a Dublin-born tailor, in Christchurch, who had a family of his own, so it turned out that my mother had half-sisters. When my mother, as a nineteen-year-old, at her first job, clapped eyes on my father who was by that time 33 years old, at the warehouse with the Americans, about 1942, I think she saw my father as the father she had never known. There was a

whirlwind romance, and a big wedding in St Patrick's Cathedral. She became a Catholic and embraced it with passion as only a convert can. She idolised Catholic priests, she used to fall in love with these matinee-idol looking priests, and my father maintained his cynicism about it all.

After my brother and I went to school the war started between them. I grew up with occasional violence but there was a lot of drinking. What I think was quite fascinating was that my mother clearly adored the Irish, because her father, who she never knew, was an Irishman. She could adopt this Irish accent that was indistinguishable from the real accent. So I suppose in my mind there was a little bit of confusion about whether she was Irish or not. She didn't know enough about her upbringing to be able to explain it to us. In a way my mother was this adopted Irish person which made the theatrics of the church and the household even more interesting to me as an artist. Even though we were working class she was fascinated with clothes; she was a serious dresser. She would never go to the parish church with us, she would go into St Patrick's Cathedral on a Sunday, where people dressed up. It was high mass.

One day we came home from school and she'd gone; she'd been threatening to for years. She had finally walked out and I didn't see her again for seven years. It was kind of a relief that the war had stopped. I've tackled a lot of issues to do with my father, and I started thinking about the things my mother transmitted to me. I've discovered there was an enormous amount of this profession, being an artist, that I could lay squarely in my mother's court: She gave me a sense of theatre, drama, costume, and colour. Our state house was her theatre and even though we couldn't afford it she systematically created a kind of elaborate décor. I've made works about the cocktail cabinet she spent two years paying off. It was one of those ones you opened up. It was mirrored inside and it mirrored the whole room: it was a faceted illusion of space and grandeur. She was obsessed with Jackie Onassis. When she died about two years ago, on top of her coffin I had the drawing I'd done of my mother as Jackie Onassis.

Coming to grips with my mother's fake Irishness, I decided it wasn't all bad, it was responsible for my love of beauty, and it has really informed my work in terms of material and the way I install works in galleries and museums. So I'm enormously indebted to her for that. Even though the gravitas of my work comes from the male side,



I feel very blessed that my mother had this sense of delusion about her life. It was hell sometimes being around it, but it's actually nothing more than a very vivid imagination that wanted to be more than she was stuck with. In a way she displayed a lot of the quick tongue that Irish have. She was very good at irony and absurdity; those are very important characteristics of my work. It was fascinating that she gave me a real insight into masquerading as an Irish person. She was more interesting externally than my father, she was interested in glamour and the high life. When she finally left home my father was getting serious bills from (department store) Milne and Choyce. She had dived headlong into dressing up, going to lounge bars, drinking, costumes got more elaborate, she still went to St Patrick's Cathedral. I don't feel the least conflicted about it. To me these have been crucial elements in what my art is, and at different times my mother has informed my art more dramatically than what I've learned from my father.

I feel very rich in my experiences of growing up in an IRA working-class bloody household in Glen Innes and everything that went with it. It's given me an immense amount of material in which to talk about the culture. I know I wouldn't have survived without people recognising what I have in my work and what I'm talking about, they recognise things about their own worlds as well.

## ***Spirituality and Religion***

John Hunt, Presbyterian minister

### ***St Columba's prayer***

*I saw a stranger yester eve /*

*I put food in the eating place /*

*drink in the drinking place/*

*music in the listening place/*

*and in the sacred name of the triune /*

*he blessed myself and my house,/*

*my cattle and my dear ones/and the lark sang in her song/*

*often, often goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.*

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I was in Ireland in 1971 tracing the footsteps of Columba. I had a book which showed where Columba had lived, and was looking for some ruins of it, when a man came out of his croft, his whiskers sticking out, and he said "What do you want?" I said that I was looking for some ruins nearby and he asked me where I was from. I said "I'm from New Zealand." He asked, "Have you got any Irish in you?" And I told him that there are two people's in the world, the Irish and those who wish they were Irish.' He answered "You'll do me, you'll find the ruins around the corner." So I engage with the spirit and I feel at home there.

My maternal grandmother's family are McLeans from the West of Scotland, from the Hebrides, who moved to Northern Ireland. The west coast of Scotland, Mull and that area is McLean country. The place where my forebears lived on the east coast of Ireland is just across the water, so I presume the McLeans crossed over at some point. I'm not exactly sure, I don't think they would be plantation people, or military people, they would have just crossed over that stretch of water. My father's family come from Devon, so my physical roots are not strong and I am a Celt by adoption.

I grew up learning from my mother mainly that life is something you struggle through. When I was confirmed the minister said, "On this eve of your confirmation it is appropriate for you to confess your sins. You kneel down and I'll offer prayers and the forgiveness of confession and if it's right for you, you say I confess that sin." So he got started and he was confessing sins I had never heard of. I remember he said "I confess I have spilled my seed upon the ground" and I thought, "What on earth is that?" I was feeling a bit of a failure because I had nothing to confess. Finally, he said "I confess I have taken your name in vain" and I was so relieved, I said "I confess that sin Lord." And when I got hold of the Celtic spirit I thought how much better it would have been if he'd said, "On this eve of your confirmation it would be appropriate to give thanks for the people who loved you, for the things you've been able to do and the things you enjoy." So I think this theology of Augustine that we are born sinful, has been responsible for terrible damage to people. The Celts were free of that, they were able to rejoice in the goodness of the earth and the goodness of people.

My mother's parents were very hospitable and every Sunday night there would be tea at the grandparents' and then music, my mother playing piano, my uncle on a violin and everybody singing. My mother was born in Greendale, in Canterbury and my grandmother in Methven, and her mother is the McLean. I grew up in Timaru with those grandparents, a close knit family. When I stayed with my grandmother overnight she would bath me and I would sit on her knee, she would peel me an apple, then she would tuck me into bed and say prayers. In her prayers she would say "Keep us safe from the men of the North." And I thought she was talking about Maoris in the North Island, but of course it was the Vikings, and this prayer, which I don't think she knew

was about the Vikings, had been said over children from one generation to the next and it is still there.

With the close family who love and support one another, there is the other side in which they are all intimately involved in one another's lives, sometimes intrusively. In the Mediterranean tradition based on Rome people came together in a big house like a convent or a monastery, whereas the Celts came together and they each built themselves a little hut, the stones overlain, called beehive huts. And so they had the community but they also had their independence. Along here in this suburb, there's a cluster of houses for retired people, mainly women on their own and one of the places became vacant. It was bought by a young solo mother. The older people were a wee bit unsure about this. However when the little boy came home from kindergarten with his painting his mother said "I'm sure the other people would like to see your paintings," so he showed them, and they enthused and gave him a biscuit and a drink. Then the young woman thought she would like to do some study at the university, so the others said "we'll look after Michael, don't worry about that." When it came to the end of the year at kindy they all went along to see the play. I think at the moment we are searching for a new way of living together and this Celtic way is a good one.

I was fortunate to be able to go to the island of Iona in the Hebrides. I went the year before each of the three books was published because that was where I did the writing. In our tradition we earn a day a month study leave, 12 days a year which I can accumulate. So after 5 years, sixty days, I was able to apply for grants. I've been minister at St Giles for 29 years and so after each seven years I took study leave and I came back with a new ministry. I remember coming back and on the first Sunday back saying to people, "I bring you good news from the world. Everywhere I have been I have met kindness and generosity." Reading the newspaper you would get a different idea about the world. I studied with Father John O'Donohue, who was a priest in the Galway parish. His bishop gave him time to do his retreat work and writing. He has a doctorate from Tubigen and he learned German so he could study there. So he is an academic as well as a romantic Celt. And when he was not absorbed in his parish work or his writing he would be with his brothers who were farmers.

On the first night we had dinner in the refectory in the abbey and when he said “Everyone is invited to mass in the chapel at seven o’clock,” someone asked “does that include Presbyterians?” And he said “Of course it does,” so we all gathered, about thirty people from 30 different countries, and there was candle light only. He came in with his vestments over his arm and put them all on poncho style and he said “Let us pray. Oh God you look upon us with compassion and with tenderness and sometimes even with delight, help us to look upon ourselves in the same way.” Almost everybody cried and I thought, there is a faith for me. So my ministry was transformed.

And while the Celtic spirit rings true for me, it rings true for everybody. People say “You are telling me things I have always known, that I haven’t honoured or acknowledged.” I think that it’s a great shame that the Irish people who came to New Zealand in the early days, such as my grandparents who came here in the 1860s, didn’t want to remember their roots. They’d come to make a new life in a new country. They’d left behind poverty and so on, but they had also left behind beautiful things. Likewise, very similarly the Maori people became Europeanised and they didn’t honour their spirituality, though are reclaiming it now in our own times. Knowing God in the natural world, knowing the presence of those who have gone before us, still with us, is the same for the Celts.

When I retire I’m going to learn Gaelic, but the bit I do know is enriching, even “Mohr” “big” turns up in lots of names, such as Benmore, or Morven. Knowing a few words does give you a feeling for the people.

My attitude to this cultural connection has grown over time. For example I have to write study leave reports , and one that I did, my adviser suggested I leave it and come back to it in five years. She said, “you need to grow into that new learning and embrace it.” I have been influenced by my reading in Celtic spirituality by John O’Donohue and I’ve been able to go back to Iona several times. I had a week with Philip Newell, who also writes on Celtic spirituality. He writes that in the rhythms of the natural world we engage with the heartbeat of God. As we engage with these rhythms we are in touch with what makes people happy and strong.

In my work I think of a man who is a retired farmer whose wife was very ill. I said to him, "This is pretty rough" and he said "John on the land we don't expect a good season every year." So it's clear to me that when we are engaged with the natural world, with its passing seasons and rhythms of dawn following the darkness, that we are in touch with endless endings and new beginnings. When we accept the endings and move on we welcome the new beginnings. I think that people who are not engaged with the natural world and the seasons perhaps don't cope with life's ups and downs as well.

I think it good in the Celtic spirit to celebrate anything that can be celebrated and it is an affirmation of the goodness of life and of God's goodness everywhere. The Celts have a nice distinction between grieving for someone on the one hand, on the other somehow going with it, so when an elderly person say has died, it is not pleasant but it is not wrong, it is the way of every living thing. Someone nearing the end of their life could have a sense of fulfilment and of peace. With the Maori people and the Celts those who have gone before us are still with us.

I was a young priest when I began to be aware of Celtic spirituality. I don't know where it came from or where I first became aware of it. It seems to have always been there. I think my mother would take me to church to worship and sometimes on a Sunday morning my father would take me fishing. In both places my spirit was nurtured and refreshed. I didn't know it was spirituality then but it was a wonderful thing to find there is this tradition that acknowledges the spirit in the natural world.

My three books reflect this. The first one has just had its sixth printing. I learned last week that last year 465 copies were sold, so, more than one every day. I think that people are looking for a spirituality and they are not finding it in the institution.

I can remember I was interviewed on National Radio by Maureen Garing for my first book and the next day a woman phoned; she had a lovely Irish accent. She said "I heard you on the wireless, and I'd like to buy some of your books. Where can I buy them?" I said "Where do you live?" and she said "I live at the Windemere Rest Home" and I said "Well, I live next door." So I said to her, "I'll bring them to you." So within two or three minutes there I was knocking on the door and she looked at me and looked at the books in my hands and she said "Jesus, Mary and Joseph it didn't take you long

did it?” So she said “Come away in.” She had me write in each one for members of her family. While I was doing this there was a knock on the door and she opened the door to her little unit, and she said “Jesus, Mary and Joseph and the little donkey, it’s the doctor now.” So he was welcomed in too, and while these words rolled off the Irish tongue, there is a sense that she welcomed Jesus, Mary and Joseph who were there with me, coming in and at the same time they were there with her also welcoming me. There is this lovely easy engagement with the saints.

The major resource for Celtic Spirituality is the *Carmina Gadelica*, the Songs of the Gaels, collected by Scotsman Alexander Carmichael from the Gaelic speaking parts of Scotland in the mid to late 1800s. Carmichael was a customs and excise man, put up overnight, so then he would ask people to tell him their poems and stories and prayers and he’d write them down in Scots Gaelic. He has been criticised by some for romanticising his writings, as other Victorians of his era were. Alexander Carmichael, like any translator, would have influenced what he wrote down, but I don’t think it makes it any less real. A more controlled and possibly dour man Alistair MacLean, from Tiree Island, has described a great deal of Victorian writing as essentially romantic nonsense. However Carmichael records where he was told these stories and by whom. Many of them come from the Western Isles – Eriskay, South Buist, North Buist, Lewis and Harris – and the wonderful thing is these stories come from the Catholic areas. They survived perhaps because it was a long way from Rome, but the reformers succeeded in repressing and destroying the stories. So it’s been very complex and very tragic.

In my early book I say what a great thing it was that the Mediterranean stream of the church didn’t get to Ireland in the early period so the people were free for their own spirituality to flower. They weren’t told what and what not to believe. However when it came to the Reformation, the Presbyterians were even more harsh. There was public burning of fiddles and the telling of the stories and the singing of the songs was forbidden and children were punished for speaking Gaelic, just as Maori children were punished for speaking Maori. It’s not just a matter of punishing you for speaking a language, they were punishing you for who you are, because your language is who you are.

I think that most Kiwis like to be outdoors fishing or tramping or picnicking or whatever, they know their spirit is refreshed from walking in the park or on the beach. They may not acknowledge it as spirituality, but that's what it is for them. I think it is a terrible shame that faith is defined so narrowly and people who are deeply spiritual regard themselves as being secular because their spirituality is engaging with the natural world. They don't know or acknowledge that this is also an engagement with the Creator. Up until recently we've had a spirit of neighbourliness and hospitality and that perhaps has its origin in the Celtic Gaelic connection.

And our egalitarianism, I think that the Roman hierarchy, empire or church didn't get to Ireland in the early period and the people were alongside one another, not put above or below one another in hierarchies. New Zealanders are very resistant to hierarchies. People say that there are people in New Zealand who look down, but no-one looks up. As they say in Scotland "We're all Jock Thompson's bairns."

It's a shame that when the missionaries came to New Zealand they weren't interested in the spirituality of Maori people. They told them to put away those pagan things, wear clothes and be Christians. And of course the Irish missionaries may not have even been aware of their Celtic roots. It's a sad story, you can imagine if the Irish and the Maori had got talking about their spiritualities it would have been a rich coming together. So part of colonisation is the devaluing of the people you are colonising. The Irish had been devalued by the English and Maori in turn very much so.



Ann Dooley, religious studies teacher

*Belfast-born Ann Dooley, nee McGeown, came to New Zealand with her family in 1970. She has taught at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Oamaru for almost 30 years. Starting there in 1980, she took time away to have children and is now Director of Religious Studies, responsible for the children's sacramental programme and the teaching of the religious programme. Connection with the northern hemisphere and Celtic roots becomes obvious she says when doing a topic that asks "where do we all come from?" "The children's parents or grandparents might be English or Welsh, somewhere from over there, Celtic, Scottish or Irish. Most of them are."*

I was born in Ireland in Belfast in 1956, lived in Springfield Road, just off the Falls Road, which is associated with Catholics, and the Shankhill with Protestants. We lived in that predominantly Catholic district until I was almost thirteen and then we immigrated, to New Zealand. There was six of us so we had to pay our own fares. We could have immigrated with financial support if there were four of us, and if my father had had a trade, but he didn't. So my mother had to sell the house, which gave us enough money for the fares.

When I was three months old my parents had gone to America with me. My mother was working days and my father was working nights. They never saw each other, so they came back to Ireland. When my mother decided again to go to New Zealand, my father said, "I'm not going to the other side of the world with six children to find I don't like it there." We came with what we had in 1970 because the troubles had started in 1969 and they were quite bad. Protestants burned Catholics out. My mother sold the house, we packed up and left and we never looked back. We came to New Zealand because my mother had two married sisters and a brother here. They fully supported our move. A lot of the Irish Catholic community here in Oamaru supported us, and not just them, other people helped us to settle in and we never regretted it.

My sister and her first husband opened Annie Flanagan's Bar here in Oamaru. It was named for our great grandmother, of our daddy. We had photos of her in the bar. We all supported and helped there. There was Irish food there, but also ordinary food, the music and bands were Irish music and had quite a following. It was quite popular. It

was absolutely packed any time you went in. I would help in the kitchen and serving meals just for a bit of fun in the holidays and my mother used to go down and do a bit to help out too. It was a family thing to start with.

Before school on St Patrick's Day we'd go down and have an Irish breakfast at the bar. My mother made champ last week, because we had a cousin out from Ireland. It's mashed potatoes with spring onions and with a bit of butter. When my daddy died people brought things around. Someone brought potato soup. Somebody else brought Guinness stew, an Irish girl, so we let her away with that. I've had potato bread and potato farls, sort of like a griddle scone.

I've been back to Ireland twice. The first time with my husband John in 1982. He went to have a look at some of the old buildings in Europe and I took him through Ireland, through the things that I'd grown up with. The soldiers were still there then and barricades and the tanks and things, security was very tight then and he didn't sort of understand all that. The next time I went my parents were there, in 2001, when the September 11 bombings happened. We were in the middle of Belfast and my daughter Rebecca came out and said "I think they've bombed the White House." My parents had gone back about a month before and we had gone over – my daughter Rebecca and youngest son Jack. My mother wanted to get on the next flight home but we couldn't. So we stayed there for the rest of the time. But on the flight back home it was very scary. When we were in Belfast then it was fine – you could go anywhere. Not like the last time when I'd been with John, which had been scary because he didn't know what to expect.

I don't speak any other language, all I can do is bless myself in Gaelic and say the Hail Mary. My mother or father didn't speak any Irish. It was North of Ireland. I think after The Troubles a lot more Gaelic language was taught in school because they wanted to build that back up again. But we had left before then. A lot of my cousins will speak Gaelic. It was a bit like speaking Maori is here, we did have some spoken in the classroom but it wasn't spoken as a second language.

Irish culture is very much a part of my life. I have a lot of Irish music I like listening to, like Mary Black. She is actually a cousin of my mother's. She sang in

Wellington a few years ago and my sisters Kathy and Eugenia and my cousin Billy went to see her and got to meet her. The Blacks are on my grandfather's side. We listen to her music and that's the music we played at my father's funeral. He loved her, so my daughter downloaded all her music for him. He was very sick, that is what he wanted, Mary Black's songs. I listen to Wolfe Tones, the Corrs, I even like Boyzone and West Life, maybe not Irish songs but Irish singers. Lord of the Dance, any of those things we go to. We went to one in Auckland quite a few years ago. I love Irish music, and Irish dancing. We do folk dancing at school and I always make sure there's Irish dancing in there. St Patrick's Day is always a big thing, everywhere, and we celebrate that as a family as well.

Because there was only someone here who taught Scottish dancing Rebecca did that a bit. There wasn't the connection here for Irish dancing. We have friends in Christchurch who came out from Ireland as well and she does Irish dancing there.

Last month my father was buried. We had a cousin who came out from Ireland on the Tuesday and we had the funeral on the Wednesday. We had the Irish music for him. We kept him at home like Irish people do. We also carried him out the Irish way: They put the coffin up on the shoulders. In the church you could hear people breathe in as the coffin was lifted up because nobody's done that here. In Ireland they don't have the handles, because handles would be plastic and you wouldn't do that anyway. So they heaved him up on their shoulders and carried him down the basilica steps, which are quite steep. We also had Irish man, Tony Gallagher, pipe us in with his Uilleann pipe, and pipe at the grave side too, which was beautiful. People commented on it. It was heart wrenching with cousins and the kids were there.

I think the kids have taken things on board too. When we have family gatherings it's everybody. We're pretty full on, you feel sorry for anybody who has got a girlfriend or boyfriend, but they are always warned. People take part and appreciate what we have to offer. That's what it's all about, family. It's somebody's birthday or an anniversary, a family thing.

I think there's a lot of Maori and Gaelic similarities. You look at some of those carved patterns, they are very similar. When people die, it's not just, "that's the funeral

and it's all over," there's a lot of holiness and tapu there. It's all about family really, and there's something spiritual there. I think there's a very close connection.

When you see the Maori wanting to go for their land, you think, "It is their land, but it was our land in Ireland too and we never got anything." The Scottish as well. It's hard because we didn't get it. It's easier here for Maori, because as soon as they say something everybody says, "Yes, it is the Maori's land." I suppose we are older countries in Ireland and Scotland. If we were to do that now you wouldn't get anywhere. You can sympathise with the Maori. It's very hard, when I think about it. The shoe's on the other foot, because we're here, and we don't want to take anything away from them. But we give a lot too, to the country. I suppose if I was in Ireland I'd want the same thing. I just realised that.

It is changing in Ireland. In the north, years ago, would you ever think Gerry Adams and Ian Paisley would work together? John and I bumped into Ian Paisley when we were in Belfast. He stood behind us. He is a very big man. He spoke to John and I was standing there thinking, "Oh my God, it's Ian Paisley. I hope no-one's taking a photo of this." Of course it was nothing to John.

People said it came down to religion. I don't think it was religion – it came down to politics really. I read a book about the women of Ireland during the Troubles. Their men were in prison getting all the notoriety. If the Troubles were to stop who would they be? They would be nobody. So the Troubles had to keep up for them to be somebody. That's what came through in the book my cousin in Greece gave me when I visited her.

When I think about it, all my sisters and brothers are all very strong in Irish beliefs. So am I. But, in saying that I might have been the only one who wouldn't have ended up getting into trouble. Boys being boys, my brother used to run messages for the soldiers. He used to get them fish and chips and they'd give him money. When the first ones came they were very good, they came to help us. So my mother used to make apple cakes/pies and bring them round to the soldiers. That was when Protestants bombed Bombay St and burnt all the Catholics out there. The soldiers came in and

saved us. Then the next lot came in. We had the Black Watch, which were really awful and the troubles started then.

It's all very well me thinking of it now, but those soldiers were sent there to do a job. I remember when we went home John was speaking to a young fella, who might have been about twenty. John said, "Could I take a photo with you?" and he said, "Oh no no no." Because they could have targeted him. John said, "He's only a wee fella," but I said, "No John," because my mother had a big family and some of them were very for the Provos, the Provisional IRA, while some were for the officials, the Official IRA. Some were very very strong. I had a cousin, a woman, who had held up a bank when she was sixteen and had spent five years in prison. That was her life. The Provos didn't do things by the book. And then there was the Official IRA, so there was a split there. Even within families you had splits. I had a lot of cousins, in my mother's family, and a lot of boys got into trouble. Not real trouble, but they'd do something, then the soldiers would pick them up. That was a way of life. They'd pick them up and beat them up. That's how you get the anti-British feeling. In saying that too a lot of the soldiers who went there didn't want to go there, but they had to go, and they were young kids.

I think because you're in New Zealand you can see all that. You can have a look at both sides and my mother can see that too. She has very close sisters. One has very staunch beliefs, so she has to be the middle of the road. But it's what you're brought up with. Because you are out of it, you can think a bit more.

A couple of weeks ago I was at my sister's watching the royal wedding. My mother follows the Queen. She thinks she's a wonderful woman. I said, "How can you do that? I'm sorry." And she said, "Well, she does her job." We wore the crowns and everything. The fellas were down in Dunedin watching the rugby and we were watching the wedding. People are people and it's just the way you think. It's history.

## ***Playing sport***

### **Charlie Dunn, boxer**

*Charlie Dunn has Irish ancestry on his father's side and Scottish and English on his mother's. Chair of Waireia Farm Trust, and a former Hokianga District councilor, Charlie, who is Te Rarawa iwi, and his English-born wife Jan, live on family land at Mitimiti. They have nine children, and many mokopuna, some of whom now live in the South Island. The family marae is Waimirirangi, at Waihou.*

*A heavy weight boxing champion of New Zealand in the early 1970s, Charlie links this skill to "the fighting Irish," also to his Scottish connections and his Maori side too. In a family history, compiled in 1994, his great aunt Keita records that she challenged the men for her right to talk, saying, "I'm a mokopuna of the fighting chief Moetara. It's the Irish in me. My grandfather was an Irishman. His son Patrick Harry Dunn married Anahera Moetara, no wonder I've got such a fiery nature."*

*Charlie recalls Whina Cooper admitting she learned a lot from his great aunts, especially Keita. There is a pencil sketch of Whina Cooper done by a friend, on the wall behind the kitchen table in their home at Mitimiti.*

My great great grandfather, Edward Dunn, an Irish man, married the daughter of the chief Moetara, so he got in at high places straight away. Apparently he came over on the trading ships, the logging ships and met up with my great great grandmother, Te Mihi, and married her. Why? According to my uncles and my dad, because he could speak good Maori. He spoke fluent Maori. They all did, right to my grandfather who couldn't speak English. Edward and Te Mihi's son, my great grandfather, Henry Dunn, married Tiro. He ended up having a full moko. One of my aunties had a photo of him when he was a young fella. From him they changed the name from Dunn to Hare Tana, which means Henry Dunn. This change continued to my grandfather, then they changed the name back again to Dunn. No-one seems to know why.

Even though Hare Tana was the chief Moetara's grandson, apparently he never took on any roles. But then his son, my grandfather's eldest brother, my grand uncle Billy Dunn, took on the role as sort of chief of the hapu of the area. He was also a very learned person. He wrote good English and good Maori, spoke the language well and he

was also a healer, a spiritual healer. We have quite a few spiritual healers in my family still today. One is my brother, my sister was, but she passed away quite a few years ago. My younger brother is like that too, though I'm not. I hear things a lot though, and I can help people. Apparently my great grandfather was one of those too. Although he never took any hierarchy positions, he had all those other gifts. I suppose the old people knew it and they organised their lives around it.

All my uncles were orators. I only have one uncle left, and he's a hard case. Years ago one of them entered oratory competitions in English and Maori, he was really good. My dad never got up to speak, he always left it to them to do all the talking. There's a proverb in Maori: Ma te teina koe he whakarangatira, The younger brother will make you the chief. They will speak for you though you are still the boss, sort of thing. They practiced that very strongly. My dad was a real kind person, he would sit there and nod his head, but if he disagreed with what they said he certainly told them.

There was not much told to us about my mother's side, but she comes of Ngakuru Pene: the English name was Penny. According to stories he had seventeen wives. He was a chief, but his descendent was I think a second generation Scotsman. That's all I know about him. My great grandmother, on my mother's side, was a beautiful lady. Mary was her name. Mary Penny, and she also married a Scotsman, a MacLean. My grandmother married another Scotsman, a Campbell. They had two children Peter and Lena. Peter got killed in Germany in the Second World War, and Lena died about ten years back. She had married again to a George Bryers, an English man, and from them came my mum. I haven't visited either countries. I hate flying. I used to fly a lot when I was boxing, but I didn't like it even then.

I remember at school, at the convent in Panguru, all of us were baptised Catholics, but there was a thing about being Irish that we were picked on all the time. Even my Dad, I don't know how many times he visited the nuns. He was quite a quiet fella, a very gentle person, but when he got angry then he had a pretty abusive mouth. The nuns were nearly all English. It was a very strong thing there about English and Irish. Another nun at the convent who was an Irish lady, Sister Carmina, she was beautiful, she was good to me. It wasn't till years after that I thought, yeah that was the reason they were like that. The nuns used to wrap you over the knuckles for talking Maori.

When I went to college Hato Petera College, in Auckland, I noticed that one of the brothers who was English said “All you bloody Irish men are the same.” It just sort of came out, I don’t think he meant to say it. No doubt he was thinking it. This was to a fifteen year old kid. I’d been through it at the convent so I didn’t take much notice of it. It wasn’t until years afterwards when I grew up that I thought there was a bit of persecution. We had an Irish priest, Father Ryan, who used to take us boxing. Anybody who played up at school put the gloves on and I was one of those who had to put the gloves on, and sort of enjoyed it.

My Dad was the armed forces heavy weight champion during the war days, so it just sort of carried on from there. He could speak about five languages from the war, fluent German, French and Dutch, though he couldn’t write English. He spent seven years in a German prison camp and was popular in the camp because he could box. The story goes that he was treated really well. German heavy weight boxer, Max Schmeling was training to fight Joe Lewis before the war started, but when it started Max Schmeling used to come around to the prison camps and work in the camps. My dad used to get fed extra potato skins so he could spar with Max Schmeling. He reckoned he didn’t mind what he was eating as long as he got something to eat. That’s probably why I was so good, because now they know you shouldn’t peel potatoes, the best part of the potato is in the skin.

My eldest son became the New Zealand heavy weight boxing champion. The younger came second runner up in the Middle Weight division and another won the Northland, Auckland and Waikato title. Another son won the Intermediate Kick Boxing title. The fighting carried on, they all trained to fight. The Maori fought for their lives, just against each other for a start: Apparently my great great grandfather Moetara was one of the fighting chiefs, so they had it in them as well. For the whole lot of them it was a question of survival, survival of the fittest, whereas with us we do it for entertainment, or pleasure. I love boxing.

When I left college and went to Whangarei to work as an electrical linesman, in the late 1960s, the thing was, “let’s go down to the pub, have a few beers and see who we can have a fight with.” That was the culture in those days, that’s how silly we were then. We watch the young kids today and think “how stupid are those kids?” but it is



nothing compared to what we used to do. My mum always told me, “Oh boy, you’ve got a short memory haven’t you.” I was in the pub one Saturday night having a fight and this guy grabbed me, took me to the back room and told me to cut it out. He said, “Come around to my gym on Monday and see how good you are.” I said, “Yeah, I’ll be there.”

I still remember that night because he put me in with this little Island boy. I was a heavy weight then, at 18 years old, about twelve and a half, thirteen stone, and he put me in with this welter weight which is 9 stone 6. He just belted the living daylights out of me. Bill Flower, who ended up being my coach for years, said to me “Do you think you’re good now?” So I began training, kept it up and three years later became the heavy weight champion of the country, in 1971. That Islander boy, a Samoan, Roy Peters, I’ll never forget him. We became good friends for years. I travelled a lot with him fighting.

There’s my grandfather and my great uncles (*pointing to a photo of the Dunn family*). Billy Dunn, who had the gift of healing, was a tohunga. Wattie, was a strong swimmer. In 1902 he was crew on *The May*, a barquentine, which left Onehunga carrying timber. It was wrecked south of the Kaipara Harbour, but Wattie swam away from the wreck and walked home. He was a New Zealand swimming champ. They took him over to swim the English Channel but he was delayed by weather and returned without doing it. I’ve heard him tell the story. I was eighteen when he died. He was a very well-spoken man in Maori, spoke broken English. He looked a real Pakeha. You wouldn’t think he was Maori because he didn’t have Maori features, except for his big ears. The Dunn features were big ears, big hands and big feet. He was one of the hardest working men I’ve ever known in my life, him and my grandfather. Wattie and my grandfather would walk to Dargaville to see cousins. They’d swim across the harbour first, stay for a month to cut ti tree, then walk and swim back again. I remember Wattie refusing a ride, saying he was “in a hurry.”

Our family had a place further back from here, 130 acres, covered in ti tree, and they just worked all day clearing the land, chopping and burning. When they finished that they went to the neighbours and did the same thing. All the returned servicemen from the Second World War got blocks of land from the crown, rehab farms, but they

weren't farms, they were just used as slaves to clean up land. People like my dad, who was wounded pretty badly, were put on land and expected to clean it up and to milk cows. As five-year-olds, we milked sixty cows by hand. A couple of years later we got a motor machine that milked three cows at a time, but it took four hours to milk sixty cows. We used to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and chase cows around in the dark, just one big paddock in bush. When I went to college at fourteen, my dad couldn't handle it by himself with my sisters, so they sold the farm. Because of the loans he had had to take out, he still owed a lot of money, so though he managed to buy a house in Whangarei he never paid off that house. It is still in the family at the moment.

This fella (*pointing to the sketch of his grandfather on the wall*) would walk to Tokoroa from here, hitch hiking. They reckoned he used to walk all the way. He didn't like to bludge off people, to get things for nothing. So if he got a ride he would stay at the person's place a week to work for it. I remember my mum asking him to come to have a feed or a cup of tea, and he wouldn't because he hadn't been out to work.

*Jan:* The old people would say, "If you don't work hard you don't eat."

*Charlie:* I wish some of the young people could be like that now. That's why I still work. Because if I don't, I keep thinking of Wattie. He spooks me, all the time. He comes into my mind and I have to get and do something, do my bees. Jan and the boys say, "You should be retired" but every time I rest, I hear Wattie telling me to get working.

Both Wattie and my grandfather, who we used to call Nanny Jumbo, lived with us. Wattie was a tough man who used to chop ti tree and dig drains, along with Nanny Jumbo. He lived very simply. We built him a shack of nikau leaves and manuka rods, a total old school whare with a corrugated iron fire place. His food included dried shark, condensed milk and cabin bread. He would come down to the cowshed and get a billy of milk, curds and whey. He ate everything raw, cabbage, turnips and cucumber, whatever he was eating for dinner. My Mum would make him a flapjack – a pancake – to eat with it, plus his skim milk. He had a billy to boil for his tea. He died at 89 and worked up till the time he died. Our grandson who goes to Mt Albert Grammar now looks like him.

The thirty three acres we have here belonged to my grandmother and grandfather. My grandfather died in 1976, when I was eighteen. Then my grandmother died. Nine years later we got a big rates bill saying we owed rates on this land. So we went to the Council and asked about the bill. They said, “Go and see Maori Affairs,” which I did, and they said, “Your grandmother gifted you the land.” But it was nine years after she died before I knew about it. She didn’t tell me she was going to do it. So we went home straight from that office, and decided we were going to shift up here. We put our house on the market and three weeks later we sold it.

Jan and I came back to the family land at Mitimiti in 1981, and an Irish man, Jim Riley, a top bloke, who lived with us for three years in Whangarei, helped teach me to build. He was 82 years old and helped build our two storied house.

*Jan:* When we came back to settle the land we thought we were going to settle down on the creek. It was just by a handshake that someone was allowed to stay there, when their land was actually up here. It was just a gentlemen’s word and a handshake, it’s not actually “owning” that piece of land as such.

*Charlie:* I think I’ve got a bit of the Irish thing about trading in me. Going out and doing things, trying to make a dollar. Even though you can’t do it here, I still find a way to live. We’ve got the sea that side, bush on the other. We’ve got fresh water on both sides of the house, wild pork and wild beef, mussels and fish, horses, and pig dogs, gardens. My granddad and dad were all gardeners, I like that too but I don’t get much time to do it, though we have gardens at home.

*Jan:* Charlie’s brother, who is dead now, always used to say “tree” instead of “three,” that Irish pronunciation, and he always had a lilt that many Irish people have. Some of the older family too have a lilt in their voice, and say “Tursday” instead of “Thursday.”

*Charlie:* One of my cousins, the same age as me, he speaks with a real Irish twang, not a prolonged one. His mum’s a Dunn. If you didn’t see his face, even if you do, he’s got those greeny eyes, you’d think he was an Irishman. There’s quite a few in the family like that, even after all those generations, it is still going.

We used to go to the Highland Games, once a year at Waipu and play all the games, like chucking the caber, and getting “on the piss” afterwards, something the Irish, Scottish and the Maori do.

*Jan:* When one of Charlie’s Scottish friends and his brother were over here, Charlie said to one of the mokos “Stop being a sook, sookie buba.” His friend said, “My mother used to call me that.”

*Charlie:* I used to think it was a normal everyday word because I heard it all the time. But that made me think it was a Scottish word.

There are strong families around here. Wherever you go they’ve all got some link with Scottish and Irish. We still have a lot of arguments about church, Catholics and Anglicans. The Anglicans are over the hill, though I don’t know what they argue about. My uncle’s wife died and the night before the burial when the family gathered, the priest got up and said “Brockie, Mass tomorrow at 10 o’clock.” That priest had refused to marry them originally because she was an Anglican and he was Catholic. So my uncle got up swearing at the priest saying he wasn’t going to bury his wife, because he wouldn’t marry them in the first place. We all looked at him. He would have been hitting 70 then, a really honest person, a nice person, but he just lost it. He didn’t try to apologise. Then all the old men started talking. One of the old kaumatua said, “Well uncle, who’s going to bury our aunty?” They reckoned it should be my brother-in-law, who had been outside drinking wine. So next morning old Matt was in church and he did the burial.

*(I recall my mother saying that a wild wind blowing around the farm house one night was the banshee, the female fairy of Irish tradition. The veil between the worlds was very porous for a lot of Irish, possibly, especially those still living on the land.)*

*Charlie:* The old people were very scared by a little whirlwind. They believed it was because someone had just died and was coming to get them. It always gives you a bit of tingle when it happens and it reminds me of what they used to say. Billy Dunn could see, and my sister was like that, my brother is like that now. I’ve got another cousin up here who is a healer as well, though she cannot see like the others. My two older sisters and two after me were all scared of ghosts. Billy Dunn was a spiritual healer and his

son used to also settle energy. Doctors are only now acknowledging that these traditions actually have power.

I carve tomb stones, just out of rocks, and a cousin came over here and asked me to do a stone for my younger brother Willie. I said, “Yeah, I’d love to do one for him.” She had a prayer she wanted me to carve on the rock. I said, “Hey, I need a mountain to carve that prayer on.” And I said, “He wasn’t a religious person anyway.” He lived with us, so I knew him well.” She said, “Yes he was, yes he was.” And he said loud in my ear, “Yeah for fucking five minutes!” She was real hoity toity, “What did you say?” I said, “Willie’s telling me loud and clear in my ear.” Then she sort of settled down and laughed. She said, “Cuz you’re right. Just before he died, he said, ‘Sis would you like to say us a prayer?’” So she said the Lord’s Prayer and he just passed away peacefully. And that’s what she wanted me to carve on the rock.

I don’t think any Irish or Scottish experience of colonisation influenced how people related to Maori. Right up till the last 35 years when Dame Whina Cooper started fighting with the Crown to get land back. Through the Waitangi Tribunal, the Te Rarawa claim has all been signed off, it’s just a matter of when they get the money. A lot of land was given back and they were compensated for what can’t be given back if land has been sold on.

I think those early settlers believed they were trading. I don’t know about “fairly,” I think they took it as “fairly” but it wasn’t till over the years that people realised these are rip offs. We found that the translations were wrong, so a lot of their land was lost through that. In those days, with no education there is no way they would have understood what was happening, especially in the English language. I find it hard to understand legal jargon now, let alone without an education. They were well spoken in Maori, then they had interpreters, who interpreted it back to them in English, and a lot of the interpretations were all wrong. That’s how some of the filings with the Waitangi Tribunal and land settlements came about.

All the Hokianga area is now under Waitangi Tribunal claim, which will go to the Te Rarawa Runanga. Because confiscation was done incorrectly, I was advised to challenge the claim. The whanau was called the Te Haretana whanau for my great great

grandfather Edward Dunn, then Hareharetana, but no one knew who Hareharetana was. The Far North District Council sold us back one block of land and tried to charge us for the land transfer, but we refused to pay. One block that belonged to my great grandmother is now run under the Te Miri Haretana Trust.

We are amongst hundreds of beneficiaries of the Waireia farm trust. The three and a half thousand acres were confiscated because the Crown were greedy, wanting timber, land and taxes. We bought it back off Maori Affairs for the price of the improvements and the stock on the land. My oldest son returned home after doing a degree at Waikato University and working in Australia, and now runs the farm. He is married to a local girl who is the district nurse. Tourist operators pay a small amount to bring people on the block and I used to do horse trekking on the sand hills, meeting people from all over the world.

I'm tired now and don't want this responsibility anymore. (*Charlie had got a file out and spread maps and documents across the kitchen table, explaining the constant challenges about family land*). My oldest son understands all this.

Land around here is owned by families with English, Scottish and Welsh backgrounds. The block where Moetara was chief is named Kahakaharoa, and Moetara's grandchildren used to own the land which now is sand dunes. My great grandparents, and great uncles and aunts were gardeners, and tree growers, they grafted fruit trees. There used to be orchards in the Kahakaharoa area, where they grew food for the shipping crews. The land used to be covered in kauri forest, but trees were logged and teams of oxen dragged them out, so now the landscape has changed. There are remnants of kauri stumps, logged by my grandfather and great uncles. Billy Dunn had a bullock team which took logs down to the harbour, and they were rolled into the sea. The area was confiscated by the crown in 1933, ostensibly because they couldn't pay the dog tax, two and six for pig hunting dogs.

My great aunts and uncles signed an agreement for pine trees to be planted on the dunes and hills. The first cut went to Carter Holt Harvey, now Junkin Nishu. The next planting was to be theirs. So effectively there was no money for that generation. There

are a few forestry jobs for the younger people of this generation but the contracts are time limited.

This road (*pointed out on our drive across the land on the north side of the Hokianga Harbour*) was put across the opening to the harbour and has caused mud flats to dry up, damaging spawning grounds for snapper and pipi. That decision changed the land for the worse. I have suggested it be opened up again but the idea was not met with agreement.

Recently we've been involved in workshops about permaculture, taken on a marae around the district. Local elders could share their knowledge, but many local people may not trust or feel confident in their own people. I'm a bee keeper now. The bees collect nectar from manuka and kanuka, tawa and pohutukawa trees. But summer was late this year so it's put back gathering the honey. I remember dad and an aunty used to cut a hole in a dead puriri tree for native bees, but Foul Brood, a bee disease brought in through importing honey from America and Australia, has killed them all off, and a lot of other bees. Maori have been criticised for letting land get untidy, but with the high price of manuka honey a manuka tree is now worth more than a cow.

## Stewart McKnight, curler

*Stewart McKnight has been curling all his life. His grandfather, born in the north of Ireland, but who emigrated from Scotland, was a founding member of one of the oldest curling clubs in the country, in Central Otago.*

*There are 35 clubs around the country, the majority of them are in Central Otago, though there are clubs in Oamaru, in Canterbury, and in Auckland, where they play in a skating rink. The average number in a club varies: a dozen members in smaller clubs, with perhaps thirty in larger clubs. So with an average number of 20, and 35 clubs that gives an idea of the number of people involved. It's a sport that has changed over time here in New Zealand.*

Getting out on the ice was part of what we did in the wintertime. I watched the curlers and skated, but soon as I left school I became a curler. With curling there is a big family connection. Families just continue down the line, once it gets into a family it seems to be there. It's a good sport, friendships are made, there's camaraderie. It's pretty social. The easiest way to describe curling is bowls on ice.

I've been involved in most sports: a life member of Otago rugby, cricket and curling. I have two boys and a girl who skated as kids. My younger son was a keen curler but he married an Australian girl so he's not curling over there. If he was still here he'd be carrying on the tradition.

I think my father's generation treasured their Scottish heritage but it wasn't very big in the scheme of things. They were farming people, and I've been a farmer too. We have a family reunion every few years. Most of my father's brothers and sisters had big families. We had a hundred and ten or twenty at the last family gathering.

We visited Scotland a couple of times and made a point of visiting the area my grandfather came from. My grandfather was born in County Down, in Ireland, but he was in Dalrie, in Ayreshire, Scotland, when he came here in the 1880s. It's not very far across the sea. I suppose he was looking for a better life like most of our people who came out. He came out and his wife followed later. He arrived in Port Chalmers,



assisted by the Otago Provincial government. He brought three sons with him and another nine were born here. My father is the youngest of the family.

My grandfather was a curler already and a foundation member of the fourth oldest club in New Zealand, Blackstone Hill at Oturhua, and played with Manuherikia at St Bathans, and a club from Naseby. He spent a bit of time on the Taieri doing various things and he came up here and was gravelling roads and that sort of thing. Then he bought a bit of land and began farming. Generations are still farming the same piece of land. Because he was born in Ireland we did a tour around Ireland. I found it very interesting, makes you realise people have changed physically since those times. I remember going to the Burn's cottage in Scotland, they had tiny beds. They obviously weren't as big a people as we are today.

The second time we visited Scotland, 1986, we went on a curling trip with a New Zealand group and toured most of the clubs in Scotland. It was quite interesting. We came to a club in the same area as Dalrie and the president of the club was a James McKnight, so there was obviously a connection there. It was all indoor curling that we took part in there and that was where we got the idea that this might be the way to go because you relied on the weather with outdoor rinks.. The indoor facility in Naseby opened in 2005, now it's curling all year round. There was a terrific lot of voluntary input, but we got assistance. A couple of us went to the world curling meeting in Switzerland in 2001 and put a case for funding for it. It was successful and that's how it got started. Without that initial boost from there we probably wouldn't have got it off the ground.

The game is played within lines drawn on the ice and to score you've got to be within the outside set which is 12 feet in diameter. And there's the centre. You try and get as many stones closer to the centre of the ring than the opposition. It's like indoor bowls, however the jack or the kitty moves. The small centre ball moves in bowls, whereas in curling it's fixed on the ice circle. For the outdoor game you play 21 ends. You get two games a day at the *bonspiel*, the big curling match. It starts at nine, so about three and a half hours each game. But in indoor games there are usually 10 ends. It takes longer because the ice is so fast. The stone goes slower down the ice though. You play 10 ends indoors, to the 21 outdoors.

When you have the big *bonspiel*, Scottish for grand match, each club puts in two teams. A team is four, so you have eight players from each club. It's yearly if we get the conditions. I think the longest spell without one was about nine years. We had one in 2001 and 2007, and 2010. At the *bonspiel* we had 34 rinks out on the dam. The Idaburn dam is actually one of the few places big enough to hold it now. In the past there would be fifteen buses, and the train, because the rail used to go right past the dam.

The tradition and the etiquette of curling is mainly based around sportsmanship and respect for senior people in the team. We can't divulge what goes on. It's a wee bit of a secret society. The basis of it is to make the sport better. At the curlers court we have a meal of beef and greens which is a traditional Scottish meal, on the evening of the *bonspiel*. The man in charge is "my lord" and there are various offices, with ceremonies done by different people.

The curlers court is something that happens after a *bonspiel*. It's a way of initiating new curlers and is one of the traditions of the game. There weren't too many New Zealand ladies curl until relatively recently. We did have a ladies club form in Naseby some years ago. You can have mixed teams. We have a lady play in our club. It's the same game playing indoors or outdoors, but to play outside you need more strength probably depending on the ice conditions. Indoor ice conditions don't vary whereas outside depends on what sort of a day it is. It can be quite hard work if you get a mild day. Women curl now, especially with the indoor game it's very much a women's sport, you don't need strength to throw like you do in the outdoor game. In 1934 the Australians came out and there was a lady who went through the curler's court, the first lady ever to go through the curler's court.

With the indoor game we just had the Pacific Junior Championships up here at Naseby, in January. There's a lot of those under-twenty kids who probably haven't played too much outdoor curling at all. The indoor game is getting a lot of schools playing it. Auckland has got a lot of schools, so it is changing. There were teams from Japan, China, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. We had Chinese Taipei, they didn't send juniors, but they have a senior team. That's something the indoor rink here has developed. Some people wouldn't believe we'd have Japanese and Chinese curling in

Naseby at an international level, and they're very good. China has only been going a few years. It didn't take Japan long to get quite good at it. The under 20 kids were listed as professional curlers, it's hard to believe.

Since visiting Scotland, I probably think a little more about these cultural connections which are important. We went to a concert last night of two musicians from Scotland. It was a really good night. They came in playing the pipes. I think when you hear the bagpipes you think of your connections. One played the accordion. That concert made you feel as though it was a nice connection to have. He had an endless supply of stories between his songs

## ***Telling the Stories: Teaching the Cultures***

Ellen McCormack, genealogist, QSM

*Ellen McCormack has spent over forty years researching the history of Katikati, originally an Ulster settlement, in the Bay of Plenty. Her work contributed to The Pioneers, Settlers and Families of Katikati and District, co-authored by Christine Clement, and published in 2012. Ellen was awarded a Queen's Service Medal for services to genealogy in 2002. She grew up in Kati Kati and now lives in Tauranga.*

These people on the wall are my great grandparents. My other great grandparents came from Ballachulish in northern Scotland. This is my father's mother and this is her mother, Isabella Cooper, from Cork, a daughter of Irish linen mill people. But we've mainly got Ulster connections, plus German and Danish and some Maori. My late husband was Maori. He had Maori ancestry on both his father's and mother's side. So there is a Rotorua connection as well as Okaiwai, over near Matamata, and Matakana Island.

I was born in Tauranga, even though my people lived in Katikati, because there were no hospitals there. My mother had the boys at home but came to town to have the girls. From an early age I was very interested in Scottish Highland dancing and the Irish of course. I didn't realise that I had this background. People didn't talk about it back in the 1940s. There was a war on and there was just too much to do. You just got on with life, and did as you were told. You didn't ask questions.

My thing was the bagpipes. Any opportunity when we came to town I'd follow them wherever they went. It wasn't until many years later that I learned I had this heritage. Yes, it's there in your background, even though you don't realise it at the time. I think it's in your genes. How else would I have known anything about it? Highland dancing was my life when I was about 12 or 13, but our teacher left to get married, so that was the end of that. It was a long way to Tauranga.

Any visitors who came, we went up to the main sitting room and you'd get called in to perform for the visitors. You know how it was. The room was opened up for the first time in six months, the fire was lit and people came to the front door instead of the back. That's really an English background too.

There is a museum at Katikati and there is also the Athenree Homestead where the history of the area is being preserved and remembered.

I'd love to go to Ballachulish in northern Scotland, and I'd really like to go to Northern Ireland, because that's where my roots are. We were to go overseas but unfortunately my husband took ill. I think my attitude has become stronger over the years.

Way back in 1967 I went to a lecture by Professor Paul Day, from Hamilton, on John Mulgan, the writer. Professor Day's wife Gabrielle had been married to John Mulgan. There's five generations of Mulgans, back to 1875 in Katikati. Reverend Mulgan came out with George Vesey Stewart who led the establishment of the settlement. John Mulgan worked for the Auckland Star and then he wrote quite a few books, and several have been written about him. He committed suicide, which they didn't talk about for many, many years. Now there's a lot of controversy about the reason why he committed suicide. We were living in Tokoroa at the time, and that was the connection back to Kati Kati. That day I really realised that my heritage was in Katikati. Since then I've collected anything and everything to do with Katikati, so I've got hundreds of files out in the archives.

The Mulgans are a really interesting family: Katikati being so small, they married into the Johnstones, who married into my family the MacMillans. The relationships of the people in Kati Kati is amazing and the duplication of names out there is also incredible, there are so many Johnstones and Stewarts.

We're in the process of writing a book. We're doing 130 families up to 1905. We've covered them all I think, because we've gone through all the books, school records, everything available. We've done a fairly comprehensive story. We've been talking to people too, but not like I used to. Twenty years ago my husband and I used to travel around interviewing people and gathering up information at all the libraries, and even go down to Wellington.

In the days when we had a train from here, I used to go to Auckland with the whole genealogy group and we'd do research up there because the library had the St Catherine's Indexes covering births deaths and marriages after 1937 in England and

Wales. I think I did about seven or eight trips on the train trying to find one man's birth and eventually found it. But that's all I could ever find about him. We found him in various books, because he was involved with gold mining up in Thames but then he disappeared. When we were working on this book that I'm working on now with Christine Clement, from Te Puke, she did some research and because she is the New Zealand representative for ancestry.com and has access to a lot of interesting material., so she discovered that our man had returned to England to his own family, to the wife and child he had left to come out here.

We've collected everything to do with these 130 people, even if it was someone having a court case over the cow in the paddock next door. The court cases have been fascinating, I came across one the other day where the chap is in court for stealing some of his neighbour's firewood. Just a few pieces and he goes to jail. And another interesting one I read is about this lass who was working at the hotel, she was probably fourteen or fifteen, these three chaps come in and they've obviously had too much to drink so they sleep on the floor in the hotel. In the middle of the night one of them was looking for the coach driver supposedly and he goes into her room drunk, he must push her, she calls out and the lady of the house arrives, he goes before the court and he got four years hard labour. The court cases bring to life the people and what's happening. Life was very tough about 1880.

One of the stories is about the publican Barney (Bernard) MacDonnell. He was born 1828 in Athlone, West Meath, in Ireland, died in Tauranga and was buried in Kati Kati. He married first in Düsseldorf, in Prussia, and as he had friends of German descent in Kati Kati, he took over the Urahara Hotel there in 1878. They said he stood six foot three tall, was a big man and was the voice of Katikati. He weighed 20 stone and had a personality that compelled attention. He was seen superintending fights in the hotel paddock, holding two candles over his head, and shouting advice to each combatant. Though he was a good Catholic he wasn't a bigot. On the Orange Lodge day he'd give them a dozen bottles of whiskey and that would be the end of any problem. He was greatly respected. Unfortunately his little son was drowned when a flood went through. That was when they shifted the hotel from down by the river to up where it is now.

I remember reading that the candidate for a parliamentary election was a Catholic, and they weren't going to have him. They went along to his meetings and found he was alright and that they could vote for him. A lot of these attitudes are out there today, and are still very strong. But those attitudes will go after my generation.

Robert Consedine, Treaty of Waitangi educator

*Robert Consedine has been delivering Treaty of Waitangi workshops since the late 1980s. The Government, he says, has never been willing to fund the workshops so he operated from the back room of his house in Burwood, Christchurch. In the mid-1990s he transplanted the New Zealand workshop to parts of Canada in two significant tours, then in 2010 started to set up the process in Australia, in Perth.*

The ability to do this work requires the workshop leader to be well grounded in their own cultural identity, in my case Irish, Catholic, Pakeha. They also need to have a broad knowledge of history and be highly skilled at managing groups, particularly conflict. I do think about Pakeha culture, and that between 1938 and 1984 we had a very significant welfare state, so the inequality gap in New Zealand was not as wide as it is now. I would call it an aspiration to a culture of fairness, which I believe Irish immigrants would have influenced. I always remember Jim Bolger being asked on television why he initiated the Treaty claims settlement process with Maori in the 1990s and he said “It was because I knew my Irish history.” That almost random answer has always interested me.

Since I got involved with the Treaty of Waitangi nearly thirty years ago the parallels between the colonisation of Ireland and the colonisation of other parts of the empire, including New Zealand, begin to make sense. Although the time frames are different some of the laws passed in New Zealand particularly during the “wars of sovereignty” of the 1860s, parallel laws passed in Ireland at an earlier period. In fact reference is made to Ireland in the New Zealand Parliament. It is worth noting that the laws which dispossessed the Irish in Ireland were the same laws which dispossessed Maori in New Zealand, and these laws in turn benefited the Irish colonial settlers.

Much has changed since the 1980s. Treaty and Maori issues have moved from the margins to the centre of the political agenda. There is a constant white backlash which has been largely unsuccessful in stopping the evolution of what has been described as “the greatest cultural comeback in history.” Some changes have been stopped. Being at the centre of the political agenda in this area is very hard work. Colonial societies are,



by definition, racist. Racism against the Irish was highly developed over the centuries and I often refer to this in my workshops.

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My mother's ancestry is very political. My great great-great grandfather Thomas Sweeney was found guilty of "felonious assault on a habitation between sunrise and sunset" and was sentenced to hang by the English colonial authorities in Tipperary, on 1 April 1823. He had been found with one of the rural guerrilla groups engaged in a struggle against the payment of tithes. Their targets were landlords and their agents. The hanging sentence was subsequently commuted to transportation for life. Thomas and his fellow convicts travelled on the prison ship *Isabella* which arrived in Sydney about nine months later, surviving an outbreak of fever as well as the plotting of a group of desperadoes who were looking to stage a mutiny. After serving 12 years he was given a "ticket of leave." He then married and had a daughter. She in turn married Timothy Keary, another Irishman from Woodford in Country Galway, and in 1865 they emigrated to Hokitika for the start of the West Coast gold-rushes.

A generation earlier, another ancestor, Timothy Keary was involved with United Irishmen in the 1798 uprising. A generation later Keary's great nephew Patrick was jailed in the land wars of East Galway.

My father's side of the family came from Ennis in County Clare in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, initially to Australia, where some stayed. The Consedine branch of the family came to Christchurch at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

When we found out about the convict ancestor our family were very excited. The information emerged from an Australian connection who wrote a book called *Family History Comes to Life*. The author Peter Cuffley is also a descendant of the convict Sweeney. My wife, Trish's, father's very large family were originally from Enniskerry in County Wicklow.

My mother was a pianist and taught me to sing from a very early age. I think I learned every sentimental Irish song ever written. The second powerful influence was the Irish Catholicism which we practiced faithfully. Most priests and some nuns were

Irish. Because of the ghetto-like nature of the Irish Catholic community of Addington the relationships were fairly close.

My parents were not political. We didn't talk Irish politics around the kitchen table. Any mention of Ireland tended to be very vague. There wouldn't have been much detailed knowledge amongst us – nor did we learn a lot about our ancestors from our parents. We began to find out about them as adults through various members of our extended family. There were 32 siblings in my generation. Each had a little of the ancestral puzzle. So our information consists of random fragments that people have discovered by visiting Australia and Ireland. One thing leads to another and occasionally a door opened. On my mother's side we now know people in Tipperary, who formally lived in Bray near the city of Dublin. We are directly related to a Keary family in Dublin and the Keary family in Woodford in County Galway. Woodford is the ancestral home of my mother's family going back beyond the 1860s. We are related through that system of ancestry to a fairly significant group of people in Woodford – including in the cemetery.

The third connection is the networks of Irish Catholics, some of whom have their own Irish relationships which they have shared with us. We have a friend here in Christchurch whose mother is from Lurgan outside Belfast in the North of Ireland. This friend is very connected to people who have spent their entire life in the IRA. As a consequence we've met people in New Zealand and in Belfast whose entire life was the IRA. One family collectively had done 59 years in jail. Our connection meant that we have followed events in the North of Ireland very closely. We have also visited IRA people in Lurgan. All of these experiences have stimulated my interest in Irish history. This has helped me to understand and contextualise colonisation in New Zealand and globally.

Yes I have visited Ireland and I loved every breathing moment of it: I loved engaging with Irish people whom I didn't know – in shops, buses, taxis and B & Bs. I loved the culture that I encountered when I travelled around Ireland. I first went to Dublin in 1967. I heard that women out-numbered men by ten to one and I thought that wouldn't be a bad place to go for a young man on the loose doing his OE. I was not disappointed.

I didn't know the family connections at that time. I would say I loved going to Ireland but I never felt I wanted to live there permanently. But I would go back at the drop of a hat, just to be there, be part of the landscape and do the things that people do when they go. Ireland is part of my psyche; I think a lot about Ireland. I read and have since read a lot of Irish history and also about the Irish diaspora coming here, the West Coast Irish and the Irish in South Canterbury. All of that contributes to my thinking about Ireland.

In 1969 I was a delegate to an international meeting of the World Assembly of Youth in Liege in Belgium. My excitement was at a peak because one of the keynote speakers was to be the renowned Irish civil rights leader, Bernadette Devlin. She had been a leader of the North of Ireland freedom struggle since 1968. In 1969 she was elected to the British Parliament from Mid-Ulster – the youngest woman ever elected to the British Parliament where she served until 1974. At the last minute her appearance was cancelled, I still remember my disappointment. I subsequently read her book, *The Price of My Soul*.

In 1992 I visited parts of Ireland as part of a Churchill Fellowship study tour. This visit included the Aran Isles where I had a glimpse of Celtic culture including the Celtic language. In 2003 I again visited Ireland with my wife Trish. We used B & Bs, travelled as tourists and stayed with relations in Bray and Woodford. We also visited the island of Clare off the coast of Westport.

From a cultural perspective many Irish Catholics have very similar attitudes as Maori to extended family and the celebration of life.

I don't know any Irish language. With the benefit of hindsight I would have loved to have grown up with a range of languages, including Gaelic and also Maori and I've always felt that we were terribly deprived growing up in this country. I can speak enough te reo to engage in Maori protocol and have a reasonable vocabulary. The limitations of an English education system became obvious to me as an adult. A colonial English imposed curriculum was a bankrupt litany of ignorance.

I think my cultural connections have deepened over time. I'll read about Ireland any day of the week. I have followed the peace process and other stories that come out

of Ireland. I've followed the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church with horror and deep sadness. Ireland is fairly extensively in my landscape. I watch most Irish movies and have just been to see *The Guard*. I have watched *Michael Collins* and films like *Ryan's Daughter* more than once. I am particularly interested in the 1798 uprising, the Acts of Union, the 1916 Uprising, the Irish Treaty of 1921 and the Irish civil war. I loved *The Quiet Man* and took my mother to see it more than once. Irish Tenors were very big in our home. There was a hush when Patrick O'Hagan and John McCormick were on the radio. We knew Patrick O'Hagan, attended his concerts in Christchurch and on my first visit to Ireland in 1967 I stayed with him at his pub in Drogheda, "Patrick O'Hagan's Singing Pub." The connection: his wife Eileen was a close friend of my Aunt Agnes.

I have a small Irish history library which includes many of the books written about the Irish in New Zealand. Two notable New Zealand histories which connected me to the Irish struggle were *The Lion and the Wolfhound – The Irish Rebellion on the New Zealand Goldfields* by David McGill. The so-called "Fenian" riots in Hokitika were triggered by the hanging of three Fenians in Manchester, England in 1867. The Parish Priest of Hokitika, Father Larkin was subsequently given three months in jail for "sedition." My great-great grandfather was a member of the first Hokitika-based Westland County Council in 1868. As far as I know he had no involvement in the riots. The second influential book was Rory Sweetman's *Bishop in the Dock: The Sedition Trial of James Liston*, 1997.

The connection shows itself, I think in the celebration of life and death, laughter: honour and family are all at work here. Usually when I am standing at a graveside I end up singing the Irish blessing, "May the road rise with you, May the wind be always at your back" ... I often get the task of leading it. Because my childhood was flavoured with Irish<sup>2</sup> songs, the parties around the piano which our family had as adults had a

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<sup>2</sup> Footnote to be inserted here.

strong Irish flavour. Our family talks about Ireland more seriously than we did as children.

I probably know a lot of Irish jokes and quite a few I wouldn't tell anymore. I have friends who send me Irish jokes on email, some – not all – of them are quite hilarious.

Often Pakeha people don't know the detail of their history and then I notice the number of Irish pubs in New Zealand is interesting and the number of people who appear to be familiar with St Patrick's Day is also interesting, in ways that don't perhaps impact on other cultures quite so much. I find that people love the Irish accent.

For example in my treaty workshops I run a video clip in most workshops where one of the interviewees on the video says something with a broad Irish accent, and people always laugh. They don't do that with English accents or accents from other cultures. Now the guy is saying something funny as well as the accent but it's the combination of the two, and Kiwis always laugh and people who are not Irish laugh. I don't know what that means. It's just something I've noticed. This could be changing as we become more multicultural.

I don't think my Irish background has influenced my involvement in the Treaty workshops. Not consciously, although I'm imbued with Irish Catholicism therefore the influence has to be there. It's in my bones. It is a combination of Irish history and Catholic social teaching. I only acquired a more detailed knowledge of Irish history after I started delivering the treaty work. I have also had significant exposure to situations of massive injustice – civil rights, war, Third World poverty, jail. I only gained a more detailed knowledge of Irish history after I started doing the Treaty work and looking more closely at the connections between Irish history and New Zealand history.

My Treaty work is directly connected to my experience in jail in 1981. The jail was packed with Maori. I heard their stories. My thinking about healing history is directly connected to the death of my eldest daughter Suzanne, in a preventable accident at Outward Bound in 1993, for which Outward Bound were made accountable. Our family had to engage in a forgiveness/letting go/healing process. Suzanne's death inspired the title of my Treaty book: *Healing Our History – The Challenge of the Treaty of*

*Waitangi*. My wife, of 42 years, Trish, a beautiful Irish Catholic, from a very large Dunedin family, a brilliant administrator and a trained therapist, took over the administration of the Treaty work after our daughter Suzanne died, enabling me to deliver Treaty Workshops full time. Since then I have worked throughout New Zealand and have over 200 institutional clients. Until recently I delivered two workshops a week – with breaks.

I puzzle over what shapes our world view. We often talk about that in workshops. Questions such as what influences our views and life choices. My observation and experience is that the values of social justice are formed in one's childhood. My working class parents who were not overtly political had very strong values about social justice. My father visited the jails and the psychiatric hospital. He literally tried to live the Sermon on the Mount. Both parents had an ethic of hospitality that was very significant. He owned little and constantly gave things away. So that was all there in our childhood. From my observation what happens is that you then have experiences that connect to those values and then somewhere you discover Catholic Church teaching about "the preferential option for the poor" and Catholic social teaching.

I think you can have the values – then you have the experience. I've had some pretty challenging experiences through travel, the civil rights movement, corruption in the Catholic Church, city slums and contact with members of liberation movements in Europe. When I worked for Corso, I travelled through South East Asia – visited two wars – and met some extraordinary people. The poverty was terrible and the impact on me was significant. These experiences connected me to the childhood values which shaped me. The reason I say that is, I think that it is possible to have a trip through South East Asia and not notice anything. So I think the values are already formed, then the experience and the values begin to connect up and you begin to get what we would call a social analysis. Then along comes the Church teaching that says "that's what Jesus was about."

In the Treaty workshops one of the most important things we do is to get people to make more of their own story. So we get them to tell an aspect of their story and then to make something of it. It's an area of life that I think about quite a lot, "what is the significance of the experiences that shape how we deal with the world?" It's complex of

course because we humans are complex. I've observed in my own journey that people who carry out actions that are significant often have had an experience which has introduced them to or given them empathy for a wider connected issue. I think my life, which has always been totally unplanned, at least in my conscious, has been a series of exposures to things that have shaped what I ended up doing. I've never had a strategic plan, or a career path.

I was involved in anti-tour training periodically during the 1970s. I received excellent training in civil disobedience from American Quakers. I first trained with all the HART (Halt All Racist Tours) leaders to stop the 1973 Springbok Tour which was eventually called off by Prime Minister Norman Kirk. We then marched and picketed periodically through the 1970s and started planning for the 1981 Springbok Tour.

I was trained in "non-violent direct action" and was determined not to participate in any action which was potentially violent. Training was the key. We formed a separate group – Action Against the Tour – to avoid being infiltrated by the Police. Secrecy was the key. I had studied the way in which people working for justice used the legal system and the jails to confront the system – Te Whiti o Rongomai at Parihaka, the American Peace Movement and those engaged in the Irish struggle. We were particularly aware of the hunger strikers in Long Kesh prison in/near Belfast, known as the Maze, and their supporters sent us an Irish flag.

Three friends joined me and we carried out two minor civil disobedience actions – "wilful damage" at the National Party headquarters and "being in possession of a building," the rugby union. With a carefully planned strategy we got ourselves remanded to the Addington jail for two weeks, where we went on a hunger strike. We had studied the effects of going without food as we were determined not to die. Our external team maximised the publicity which reached the UK, Europe and South Africa. After leaving jail I continued to march but did not take any further leadership positions. I chose to focus my energies on my three small daughters.

I don't think the experience of colonisation has necessarily affected how Irish and Scots have related to Maori. Global literature tells us that the Irish tended to join the dominant class for a variety of reasons. For example, although there was no

conscription in Ireland 210,000 Irishmen fought for the British Army in World War One – 35,000 died. Irish who went to America tended to support the slave owners. They often benefitted from colonisation wherever they went. I've never encountered anything in New Zealand that would change that broad idea. There are of course individual exceptions, but the broad idea is that people who have been oppressed tend to end up joining the oppressor. I don't think it's confined to the Irish. Paulo Freire, the famous Brazilian educator wrote that "the oppressed became the oppressors." I think, right through the empire, escaping from oppression meant joining the oppressors. I don't see a lot of evidence that it was any different in regard to Maori.

Having said that there are plenty of Irish people around who are doing significant things with their lives underpinned by the same values we talked about. You encounter wonderful people everywhere who try to make a difference.

I often say to people in workshops in the dialogue around personal journeys "If you knew your own story you'd become a natural ally of the Maori struggle." A large number of people don't know their own story. For example, I say to people, "Why did your ancestors leave Ireland?" They wouldn't have heard of the penal laws and some may have not heard of the famine. They wouldn't know anything about the colonisation of Ireland. One of the connections we make is to talk about the way colonisation dispossessed their own ancestors in much the same way as Maori were dispossessed. People get a glimpse of the connection. It's rare to encounter people who have already figured that out.

The understanding of one's own history can vary within families. In our family, we probably don't argue much about the Irish history part. It is likely that I am better informed about the detail because of my work, but if we talk about our childhood we argue all the time. We have this hilarious situation where I would start telling a story and my brother Jimmy or Noel would say "No Robert, that's not the way that happened at all." That would be the "family of origin" stuff. The level of interest in and knowledge of Irish history varies a lot. However, we are very connected.

When my oldest brother Michael was dying a few years ago, I said to my friend, who owned a bus with all modern cons, "My brother is probably not going to live all



that long, I'd like to do something with my family of origin." So the five of us got together and went on a bus trip. We went over to Westport and down the West Coast, we went to the sites of our ancestry at Goldsborough. The foundations for the school are still there and one or two other places we knew about, such as the school our ancestor was connected to. This would be Timothy Keary's daughter. He arrived in Hokitika in 1865.

The remarkable thing about that trip was we didn't debate the detail, we just told stories about each other that were just magic. The fact that we knew that our older brother would not see old bones probably affected us. We had this magnificent four days. We lived on the bus most of the time – and the occasional motel.

A lot of us are writers. My deceased brother Michael wrote hundreds of poems, he travelled with his work and wrote poetry as he travelled. He wrote lovely poems about all sorts of things. My younger brother Jim has written two books (and co-authored a third) on restorative justice. He is a prolific writer of published articles. He has edited a social justice paper called *The Common Good* for nearly ten years. I have written two books – the second with my daughter Joanna – and I have a bi-monthly column in *Tui Motu*, a Catholic Church publication. We're not professional writers, but we write about what we are involved in, so we are not authors in the commercial sense although our books have all been commercially successful. My three daughters are all excellent writers. Suzanne was a trained journalist.

All three of my daughters were very connected to Ireland. Joanna did a school project of the family on my mother's side. Suzanne (my deceased eldest) never got to Ireland. Bernadette, who, looks' Irish, is very connected and has stayed with relations in Ireland.

Our generation buried our last Consedine uncle recently, he was ninety six. He was a charming, grumpy character, he flirted with women till his last dying breath. We loved him. Our family is pretty good at "death." We do it well and we do it fully. The Irish influence is pervasive.

I think there is something about being Irish Catholic. None of my generation that I'm aware of, have become successful in the system. We are not people that

Governments appoint to do things, neither does the Catholic Church. It's our attitude towards authority, shaped by the feudal system of the Catholic Church and the societal sense of being outsiders. I do not automatically trust authority or institutions which I regard as necessary but inevitably self-serving. I've often thought about this and why our family of origin have often felt drawn to doing something that is not institutional. I'd like to think that the reason I've never been appointed to anything in my whole life is that the systems wouldn't trust me for five minutes. We have managed to maintain our prophetic edge.

In 2005 I was asked to stand for the Maori Party. After I refused twice, because I thought my Treaty education work was more important for me, I agreed. I had a long term relationship with Tariana Turia and a network of Maori throughout New Zealand. I finally agreed to stand on the condition that I could not possibly get elected. They agreed and promptly put me number six on the Party list, which was dangerously close to the possibility of being elected. I campaigned, from my friend's Colin's 1965 Bedford bus on which we lived. I networked with Maori everywhere and loved every minute of it. I arrived in Wellington on the day before the election exhausted, broke, and exhilarated. There were other Pakeha people on the list but none in the top 20. I am still a member of the Maori Party but not active.

Patsy Montgomery, manager, Waipu Museum

*Patsy Montgomery, Manager at the Waipu Museum, was involved on the cultural advisory group for an exhibition entitled The Scots in New Zealand which ran at Te Papa, from 2008 to 2010. This meant going down to Te Papa two or three times a year, for two or three years.*

When we started off with the “blue skies” workshop for the Te Papa exhibition people were vowing they were going to steer clear of the clichés, but in the end we came full circle: The hero image was a bunch of kids doing a mass Highland fling at the Waipu Highland Games. It was fascinating that we ended up, by that circuitous route, expressing the thing which could have been interpreted as a cliché. I think in the end you have to acknowledge there’s a joy in it. It’s a wonderful opportunity for young people to learn the discipline of dance.

We have one girl here at the moment who is about ten or eleven maybe, and she is mesmerising. She has acquired such a skill in “lifting” that it’s almost like she floats. To see such a structured dance become lilting, that is an art in itself. It’s like the formality of Baroque music, given a lift by the genius of the performer, it becomes something other than a structured thing. She is so good, when you’ve seen something like that you realise what’s on offer. Also, in a place like Waipu, it provides an opportunity to jointly express a point of difference.

We’ve definitely gone for the cliché of dressing in the tartans in our choice of the signs and the new images we’ve got outside the museum. I think it would have been in the 1870s that Waipu people started exploring that expression, which already was a modern cliché. Their immediate forebears never wore tartan because that had been forbidden for forty years, and then they got into the Calvinist thing. There seems to have been no use of tartan in the era when people settled here, so it was the next generation that started exploring those things, wanting to establish a sense of identity. I suspect that first generation actually called themselves Nova Scotians, they didn’t call themselves Highlanders. I have always found that really interesting when most of them had been born in Scotland. It’s the next generation that looks back.

I think my interest in my Scottishness was probably generated by my first experience of hearing bagpipes. When our family, as an extended family, attended the 1953 Highland Games, the centennial of the arrival of the Scots here at Waipu, I remember as a five year old being on my father's shoulders to watch Highland pipe bands at the Caledonian Games. At those particular Highland Games they had massed pipe bands marching around the entire Caledonian Park, and I've never forgotten the feeling of the hairs on the back of my neck standing on end! I think from then on as a little girl, I probably had a sense of Scottish ancestry. I didn't discover till quite recently, as a result of working here at the museum, that pipes and tartans and Highland fling for girls, as symbols of Scottishness, are quite a modern interpretation. But nevertheless they give people of Scots descent something they can "hang their hats on", in terms of a kind of identification with a distant past, which we all like to have as human beings.

I had two family members born in Scotland. We have a wide generational gap: not many people have such a wide three-generational span. I found that my Montgomery family was fascinating and gifted, so they were the side of the family that most intrigued me. My great-aunts and my great-uncles were interesting. I think there were nine brothers and seven sisters, 17 altogether, but two died in childbirth. Out of the seven women I think only two married, so I had five great-aunts who had careers. Like a lot of Scots families there was obviously a great emphasis placed on education for women. I had this number of great aunts who were educated Edwardian ladies. Even in the 1960s and early 70s they were still in their beautiful homes, with magnificent antique furniture and exquisitely romantic tastes, which for a little girl was highly influential. I was influenced by the beauty of their homes and the kind of Edwardian romanticism that was manifested in them. There were wonderful bookcases full of leather bound books, and I spent my Standard Four year, aged 9 or 10, reading consistently through my Great-aunt Maude's collection of Thomas Hardy and Jane Austen – there was that kind of influence.

My Great-aunt Gladys was in fact one of the first New Zealand women to qualify in medicine, though she wasn't well known because the family actually sent her back to study medicine in Scotland, as was custom of a Scottish immigrant family. She even

went as a doctor to the Spanish Civil War, which indicated to me that she was probably a socialist. The rest of the great-aunts were of course rather blue in their politics. I'm quite sure there was never any other manifestation of socialism, apart from my grandfather who was a renowned orator in the early years of the Labour movement on the West Coast.

The great-aunts have been written up at the Auckland Museum. Gladys became a public health doctor in London, but she was also a writer who submitted stories and articles to magazines and apparently she was a very gifted landscape painter. Some of the other great aunts were musicians.

I had this childhood of romantic notions about Scotland, but I grew out of it, as we often do with some of our childish fascinations. I became quite "ho hum" about it all. But the strange thing was I ended up moving to Waipu, not because of its Scottishness – at the time I knew nothing of its history – but on a trip north in 1973 my vehicle broke down on the Brynderwyns, so I got towed into Waipu, discovered what a wonderful community it was, and I never left. Talk about fate. I spent 26, 27 years creating and running my own craft-based business producing ceramic tiles with a partner. Eventually I left that partnership and worked as an artist and musician for a few years, but then took on this job, as manager of the Waipu Museum.

Prior to this I used to play a comic character, Fanny McCavity, who would send up the Scottishness of the area. Lachie MacLean, who I used to perform with, and I used to talk about Fanny always wanting to work in the House of Memories, as the museum used to be called, but there were too many rather well-endowed women working there, and there was nae room for me. We used to make jokes about this, but in the end Fanny ended up running the place.

It is interesting, having had this acute fascination with Scottishness as a child, growing out of it, then in my relative old age ending up being so involved in something so Scottish. I'm 64 now: I didn't start working here until my mid to late fifties, so I've been here eight years. I was born in Auckland, my aunt and uncle had a farm between Warkworth and Wellsford, and I spent a lot of my childhood there on that farm. I think I was destined to never stay in Auckland. I read *Time* magazine avidly and I could see

what would happen to Auckland, so I decided at 22 I would choose to get out before I was entrenched in income generating and not able to get out of Auckland. So we did the whole hippie exodus thing, planning an alternative way of earning our living.

I was interested when I found out from my aunt that my grandfather was involved with the Labour movement. She said if he had been around in the years of the formation of the Labour Party, he would have undoubtedly been in it. I've often wondered where my kind of socialism thing came from, also my gift for public speaking. One thing I can count on is I can stand up in front of people and words will come: it's like they come from nowhere. So it kind of indicates to me a genetic thing, relating back to something that was a generation beyond me.

I always thought my grandfather was born in Edinburgh, but he wasn't, I've since learned that he was born in Carluke, in South Larnackshire, in 1873. My grandfather, who lived at the time on the west coast, in New Zealand, disappeared in the early years of the First World War. He ran off with another woman, and family legend has it that he went to Kalgoorlie, in Australia. My great-grandfather was involved as a mining engineer and consultant but also ran a number of hotels and owned hotel licences, so talk about playing both ends against the middle: My family were involved in booze and mining. Those things go hand in hand, but the great-aunts were teetotallers, and they were wealthy women. Though their father died in 1911 they were still wealthy women in the 1970s. Their fortune was based on liquor but they were teetotallers, we always thought it was very funny.

I have been to Scotland, but I'm still ready to go back again and have a really good look, because my son has a Scottish partner. When he was in Scotland recently he went and had a look at where all the names come from: Montgomery comes from Ayrshire and Larnarkshire, which indicates to me that the family I hail from would not have moved in a thousand years, so it probably would be quite easy to trace.

Going to Scotland didn't change how I related to my Scottish family. The whole thing was already so embedded. Our generation of Kiwis was raised with the connection to the United Kingdom. We didn't have books on New Zealand wildlife – we had books on British wildlife, we knew more about Great Britain than we did our own country.

When I went back and visited some English relatives of my ex-partner, the guy who was the same age as me said “You don’t seem like a foreigner,” but my children did to him, because they had a very different education from what we had. We were raised to be little members of the British Empire and in our primary school we saluted the Union Jack on Trafalgar day, for heaven’s sake, I’m not saying it was a bad thing to do, I thought that was wonderful because we had such an ingrained sense of history and we have a very deep connection with the British Isles. So that feeling was there, I just felt like I belonged, but equally I felt I belonged in England.

I studied history at university, but the one thing I didn’t hear about was about the Battle of Culloden. It was only when that famous television documentary was screened that I really learned about it. It was the first time they ever used hand-held cameras to film a battle. It was quite a profound shift in filming techniques. I know the particular film maker had one documentary the BBC refused to screen.

We wouldn’t have spoken any of the language. Ours is not a Highland name, it’s a Norman name, and funnily enough, quite instinctively, I’ve been drawn to French, not to Gaelic. I sing French songs, I’ve a lot of French language but I’m constantly thinking I must learn it properly. My son married a French woman, so I have French relations. It’s also funny the Montgomeries came across with William the Conqueror.

I do think there is no co-incidence that I’ve ended up in this job and in this place, because of that first sense of Scottishness I had as a child. It’s kind of a mysterious thing, but I actually believe in the power of thought. It is a very slow energy, but if you focus enough energy with thought I really believe that somehow some pathway creates itself for you. It might take years but I do believe in that kind of manifestation.

I got sent to folk dancing, at about four, where we learned the Irish jig, and the Highland fling, I didn’t have a sense of being Irish, I had a sense of being Scottish. My parents never took dancing particularly seriously, but I remember the dancing teacher said to them I could have been a competitive Highland dancer if I chose to. I don’t think my mother would have wanted to put that degree of energy into supporting that particular pursuit. So it was taken as a compliment, though I didn’t take it too seriously because I was involved in so many other things, but it added to that sense of pride. And

then the poetry we were taught, especially Robert Louis Stevenson – I had *A Child's Garden of Verse*, some of those lovely poems that had Scottish influence. Of course “Loch Lomond,” “Ye Banks and Braes” – that was probably the first Scottish song I remember learning and singing.

We had a visit to the museum in 2012 from the Dalhousie School of Medicine, in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where they have a Music in Medicine Programme. It was a programme set up to help diffuse the high pressure of doing a medical degree. With about 90 students, it maintains a number of a cappella singing groups. They brought 27 young people from late thirties to early twenties to perform here, and did this wonderful up tempo funky version of “Loch Lomond.” I think this was the first Scottish song I had ever heard, probably for many people that would be the case. Well I couldn't stop crying, it was so powerful, and I think everyone else felt the same. I always respond to bagpipes, they will make me cry. I think if you've got any Scottish ancestry you're very lucky to have this feeling!

Yes my attitude has changed over time. I'm more pragmatic about it now. I kind of have an understanding that just out of a purely emotional need human beings like to have a sense of connection to the past. I know that mine is fanciful, but I also have a sense of deep connection to those people and my kin folk on my mother's side, and the different places they came from. I can claim two convicts in Australia, so I have that same sense. It's just that it's easier to connect with the Scottish side because we have the clichéd iconic things to attach to. I've got a Montgomery tartan scarf, and I'm really proud of the name. I do, though, have a better understanding of the needs people have that makes them want to attach to something from their past.

In my primary school we must have had some visionary teachers because I've compared notes with other people of my age. In the 1940s New Zealand primary education was absolutely radicalised and lead the world in its creativity. We were also taught to be proud of the fact that New Zealand didn't have a huge gap between the rich and the poor. These were the things that were taught to me as a primary school child. I would doubt that anyone teaches primary school children these concepts and ideas in this day and age. But we were taught that, and that has directly come from Peter Fraser, who was a Scot. That whole idea of egalitarianism is deeply embedded in the New



Zealand psyche, and I wonder how much longer people will put up with what is essentially influenced by globalisation, driving up the salaries of certain people astronomically while other people are so devalued.

I would think there are many aspects of what we would call Kiwi character, influenced by Scottish culture. I don't think egalitarianism is an English thing. England was still operating as a very class-ridden society up till the 1960s. Also education for women, that's a particularly Scottish thing. When you think about my family, where at the beginning of the twentieth century, young women were so valued that they were sent back to Scotland for their education. I believe that's a very Scottish thing.

We always pride ourselves on our self-reliance and ingenuity, which is probably reflective of the Scots. They were the most educated European country for a number of years because of Knox, so they would have been highly inventive and I think Kiwis have always prided themselves on being inventive, finding other ways to do things. So I think that is another thing you could attribute. Another thing which is hugely Scots is a lack of showing emotion. I don't know about the Highlanders, the Gaelic lot were a bit more expressive, but for the rest of Scotland, central and Lowland Scots I think they're quite dour. The whole idea of dourness, and New Zealanders are dour, they don't express things easily, yet there's a lot of underlying aggression. We are aggressive drivers. I think when we get behind the protection of a vehicle where you can't be seen we do some things which aren't very nice. We're self-effacing, I think that's very Scottish.

I feel now people who have been raised since the 1950s don't have the same values system taught them, those people have been highly influenced by New Right economic theory which isn't about commitment to egalitarianism and sense of community. I don't have any sense of the present government expressing who we are as a nation. I think those characteristics which have come down to us from early settlement days from the Scots are probably diluted now.

You've got to be a person who loves history and thinks about history, to think, "Yes, my forebears had this happen to them." Scratch the average Pakeha New Zealander and they're not very tolerant of thinking about the suffering Maori might

have experienced. I'm not a bleeding heart liberal by any means, I think that anger is not a helpful emotion to sit back and live with, or resentment, and I do believe that a lot of indigenous people get stuck in that trap, though I think there's very good reason for them being stuck in that trap. I think the Waitangi Tribunal has been a very important way of trying to deal with this, but your average Kiwi is very resentful of it, in my experience. I guess none of us like to experience anger and resentment directed against us personally and be blamed for things our forebears did.

You hear people scorning what some Maori have said. Remember when Tariana Turia was talking about post-colonial stress syndrome. Well, I have often said to people, you think about the mythology of Robin Hood, who was Saxon. He was robbing the rich Normans to pay the impoverished Saxon peasants, at least 100 years after the Normans invaded England and turned the Saxons into serfs. I know they left some of the Saxon lords in place, but mostly the wealthy and the land owners became Normans and the Saxon people became impoverished peasants, which is exactly what happened to Maori. They've been disenfranchised, so that feeling of being an underdog could last for a few hundred years before the intermarriage rate and the cultural overlapping actually defuses it.

It's said that the people who came here to Waipu didn't want to shift Maori from their land, but I think that might have been a bit of a romantic view, looking back on the past. I'm not quite sure there is anything really there to verify that as a fact.

Sean Brosnahan, curator, Toitu Otago Early Settlers Museum

*If you were to go looking for “Kerrytown” today all you would find is a plaque on a gateway in a South Canterbury paddock. It was once a vibrant community of Irish settlers: a cluster of farms, around the edge of the big Levels Station. The new settlers could buy 50- and 100-hundred acre farms and had large families, but to keep getting land the second generation had to move away in the 1890s and early 1900s, following the breakup of the great estates.*

*Sean Brosnahan, an archivist and curator at Toitu Otago Settlers Museum in Dunedin, has written about Kerrytown in The Kerrytown Brosnahans, his family history of a multi-generational chain of families. He also now teaches at Otago University on Irish and Scottish migration.*

*There was a sense of the ancestors keeping watch in the gallery the day I spoke with Sean, as walls were covered to nearly ceiling height with photographs of earlier Scottish settlers from the area.*

My paternal grandfather, Dan Brosnahan, was one of the children of the migrants who set up Kerrytown, the original settlement of Irish Catholics in South Canterbury. His father’s people came out in chain migration from County Kerry to South Canterbury, between 1860 and 1873 from the east Kerry parishes of Castleisland, Ballymacelligott, and Currans. There is a substantial connection with County Kerry through the Brosnahans, the Foleys and other associated families through the O’Neills.

When I was a little boy I was taken out to Kerrytown and petted by the old aunts. My great aunts and uncles who hadn’t married stayed on the old family farm. I don’t remember them, though my sisters might. My father’s father had left Kerrytown to go and get his own farm as a returned soldier, so he grew up in Sutherlands, over the hill from Cave on the family farm, Emerald Hill. He worked for his uncle on the old family farm, and really should have inherited the farm, but he had a falling out with his uncle. None the less he kept up relations with them. He lived amongst the people, in what you could call the evening time of Kerrytown, when there were still families living there in their old homes, people still went to Mass at the Kerrytown convent and the nuns were still there. He knew his Foley relations and used to have breakfast there after going to

Mass. There was a real Irishness about those people, because they had grown up in that Irish milieu. I can remember my grandfather spoke with an Irish inflection even though he was New Zealand born.

My father is a link to that disappeared world, so I always had a consciousness of that heritage. Although you don't appreciate it when you are a child so much, I did come to appreciate it increasingly as I got older. It's been great for my father, myself and the rest of the family to reconnect with those things, through research for *The Kerrytown Brosnahans*. There is some pride in this. People all around the country know about Kerrytown, but when they go there they find that it's just a plaque on a gateway in a field now, nothing else there.

I've sort of interrogated that experience of Kerrytown historically quite a lot and see it as interesting that they didn't try to preserve their Irishness and hand it over as a cultural artefact. The religious thing was strong, though I've tried to push the idea that the Catholicism they brought here wasn't really Irish – it was European. They were becoming more European in their Catholicism at this time. The way that they worshiped, the sodalities and types of prayer were becoming very Roman and that was very important.

So Kerrytown is to me a sort of a vehicle of integrating and assimilating and getting on in the New Zealand colonial context. They still had their dancing and their ways of living but they weren't really concerned about making sure the children coming through learnt to speak Irish. My great grandmother was an Irish speaker I believe, and on the other side of the family there were a lot of Irish speakers a couple of generations ago but they didn't hang onto that.

On my mother's side, half her family came from Kerry, and lived in South Canterbury, while the other half who lived in Southland came from County Galway, from the parishes of Clare Galway and Annaghdown, Corundulla and Oranmore, all the area of east Galway, near Galway city. They established themselves early in Otago in the mid-1850s through a chain that bought people there through the late 1850s and into the 1860s. Other members of the family came out from County Tyrone and County Cavan and went onto the goldfields.

My grandfather on my mother's father, Patrick Scully, grew up in Pukerau in Southland on a farm, and was part of that wider Galway community. Things he said would have echoed the Irish milieu he grew up in, but apart from a few words, like *amadán*, the word for "idiot," they didn't try to hang onto the language either. They let it go and became very colonial. You know Dan Davin's novels captured that community pretty well. My people were living alongside his there in Southland.

Music is an interesting aspect of the culture. My paternal grandfather was a singer and apparently in public gatherings he'd get up and sing. My father is also a singer who has spent his whole life entertaining. He sang lots of Irish songs, but to my mind, having come to Irish music in my own way, there is a fake quality to the songs he sang. To a degree the migrant songs, the Thomas Moore sappy ballads, which were popular among the migrant communities, have a sort of a fake quality to them. They're authentic in their own way, but if you're talking about handing on Irish culture that's not the real deal for me; to me Irish music is in Irish. I like Irish songs that are in Irish. I've learned to sing in Irish, and I can read translations so I know what the song is about. If earlier generations of the families were handing on Irish culture I would have been taught Irish songs in Irish, but instead I taught my father Irish songs in Irish. He actually found it beyond him to learn them in Irish. I have sung Irish songs a few times at family gatherings, including at an aunt's funeral, at her request.

I know from my studies there were Irish music traditions at Kerrytown, although in the school I'm presuming they taught piano. It was that forward looking thing the nuns were doing. The piano was the instrument of the middle class Anglo community that dominated New Zealand and that the lower ranks aspired to emulate, while the Uilleann pipes were an instrument from the peasant past. In the community there were pipers. Bob Bickerton, a well-known folk musician in New Zealand, English in origin but very keen on Irish music has put out a few albums and one of his songs is a tribute to the Kerrytown pipers. He used to go up to Kerrytown to learn tunes off them. That's where I found out about their existence. Then I talked to my Dad about them, and he remembered that. You tell them and they remember things. I think, it's an interesting fact that so much of our music heritage is rediscovered and reconnected rather than being passed on.

The same with stories I suppose. We didn't get told stories about leprechauns, though I know people down in the Dunedin area did in the early days. There's a very good local unpublished biography by a Dugald Poppelwell, the son of the founding Scottish Catholics of Otago. Because of all the Galway people who came here, his Catholic confreres were all these Irish Catholic kids, and he talks about them having superstitions which he was very taken with as a child himself in the 1860s – the little people and all that sort of thing. Poppelwell talks about Irish funeral customs like keening in a way that's very reminiscent of tangi when you read it, customs which haven't continued. He describes very precisely funerals he went to, in the later nineteenth century, where there was a very formalised way of lamenting. Women would come in looking happy, but they were saving up, reserving their time for when their friend came – exactly what Maori people do, where women will go through their ritualised lament. We didn't have that in my experience in South Canterbury, and none of that echoed down to my generation.

I can remember the old people's funerals, my paternal grandfather's and my great aunts'. We were very taken with was the way they said the rosary. I can remember my Great-aunt Molly from Kerrytown, one of the old ladies from out at The Levels, who had actually married when she was young just at the end of the war, but her husband had died. They had both caught flu in the influenza epidemic and he died, so she had this long widowhood. She lived with us briefly at the end of her life when she was sick, so I knew her. At her funeral, one of the earliest big family funerals I can remember, we all went down to the undertakers to say the rosary around her body. We kids couldn't stop laughing because of the way my grandparents said the rosary, we couldn't hear the words – it was this rhythmic chant.

Very little comes down to us in families like mine, we don't hand things on, though I've got my great grandfather's pipe, and we've got a few photos. An important part of my work on the family history book was gathering up photographs from all round the country from all sorts of people, I made contact with and got quite a good pool of them. I used quite a few of our family and it was magical to see all the people in those group shots of Kerrytown. It sort of brought it back to life and enshrined it in a way that it won't ever disappear now.

I have been to Ireland, for a rather brief two weeks, at the end of my overseas experience in 1986. My wife was pregnant and we thought we better go home, so it was a trip to make sure I went there. I couldn't do both sides of the family so I concentrated on my paternal side, the Brosnahans and went to Kerry principally, though first I spent a week in Dublin doing research at the national library. At that stage all these sorts of documents were not commonly known, now you can look at them on the internet. I then spent a week down in Kerry trying to track the family down further. I did research in Tralee and roughly worked out where they came from, but it was impossible to go and find them because there was no-one there to find.

But I went into the hills behind Killarney and visited the parish priest in Currans, who got out the old parish register and did find family members, including my great great grandmother's name in Irish, Gobnait. She was known here as Deborah, the English translation. A Hugh Brosnahan married a Gobnait Butler and since there weren't too many Butlers in that area it was pretty obvious it was her, but we didn't know what Gobnait was. So the priest went away and rang up his sister, who said Deborah. My sister is called Deborah, so the name has come down the line. I called her Gobnait for a while but she didn't like the sound of that.

The parish priest pointed me in the direction of a family of Brosnahans so I went and knocked on their door. We couldn't establish whether we were directly related but they were very welcoming and took me in. The son of the family who was about my age took me out in the car and took me to visit the old seanachie (story teller/historian) down the road who was writing a book about the parish. He was supposed to know everything and was also famous in the district for his propensity to prosecute people for leaving his gates open. Consequently we were shutting gates left right and centre. He made me welcome, his two gangly sons and a daughter too. I hadn't really believed he had this book, but he got out his manuscript, so he did. They pulled out a loaf of bread, cut it up and he poured tea in the saucer, just like my grandfather used to drink his tea, so I felt there was some sort of connection there. I subsequently sent them a copy of my book and they wrote back and really appreciated it. I also sent a copy to the Tralee public library.

It was an important experience going there, and it did make a difference to my feelings and attitude, because I realised when I was in Kerry that this was where my people came from, but it wasn't my place. At that stage it was Canterbury. I realised when you move off like my people did, you reconnect and bed down. The family have been in South Canterbury about one hundred and forty years now. I had a real sense it was good they left because at that stage Kerry was very poor, they have had a great resurgence since, but at that point I thought "good job, we've done well here." It's been important to me having that sense of reality of the experience, not sugar-coating it, or getting waffly about dear old Ireland.

In terms of the language, it annoyed me when I looked at Irish words I couldn't make any sense of the letters and the sounds. I just felt pathetic that this is my ancestral language and I can't even read what the sound is. I'm good with languages, I learnt French and German at school and university. I've learned Maori and am capable to a basic degree in Maori, so I was determined to make some progress at learning Irish and have had a few cracks at it. I eventually bought a very good self-help course on Amazon and have read the first ten chapters. It is still sitting there waiting for me to carry on, but basically I got to the point I could look at an Irish word and most of the time I could understand what the sounds were, without having to think about it.

I've learnt a few basics of the language though I didn't aspire to speak Irish because there is no-one to speak Irish to. I wanted to be able to say a few words, to be able to read, to look at a word and not say some stupid thing, to know that an "mh" is a "wh" or a "b." So I've got to that point. I will go further one day. I would rather become more competent in that than Maori, but that will have to wait. One day I might go to Ireland and do a summer school. I like to think I could connect with the way my ancestors spoke, because it is so recent. My great great grandmother and my great grandmother were Irish speakers, I knew my grandfather and he knew her, so it's not that long ago.

I am also doing that for the music. I'm in a waiata group here in the city council and we learn Maori songs and sing them, in public. I decided every time I learned a new Maori song I'd try to learn a new Irish song. The Maori songs are easier to learn but the Irish songs are bloody hard – I've persevered so have now got quite a big repertoire of Irish songs and I've taught my children some of them. When they were little they were



open to that, now they wouldn't bother so much, but when I die they'll probably sing an Irish song over my body. They know I'd like that.

I changed the spelling of my name, which is quite important. My name is Sean with a fada – the little slanted line, like French has. Even though my mother comes from an Irish background, when she saw that name she thought it was “Seen.” She thought she couldn't saddle me with that all the time, so they used the English spelling, “Shaun.”

When I was born, my great aunts at Kerrytown apparently created a bit of a fuss. They were aghast at me being called Shaun, because it was Irish, they wanted it to be John, because their father was John Hugh Brosnahan, though I discovered subsequently that his nick name was Shaun Hugh. There were so many Brosnahans in Kerrytown with the same name that they needed to have nicknames. There was another John who was called Pegleg because he'd lost his leg, and my old man was Shaun Hugh because his father was Hugh. Apparently the great aunts said, “He'll change it when he grows up” well I did, but I didn't change it the way they thought, I changed it the other way. I did it by deed poll when I came back from Ireland.

When I was at university I used to play with the spelling of my name – I would write my surname in Gaelic sometimes too, a sort of a statement. It's like Maori people doing the same thing, like Steve O'Regan becomes Tipene O'Regan. The day I landed in Ireland I remember thinking, “Right I'm never spelling it the other way again. From now it's always Seán and with a fada on it – Seán O'Brosnácháin.” The fada is really important as a cultural signifier, which is meaningless to everybody else, but it is my way of saying, look here this is a bit different, it is special and it is my cultural heritage. So I did it by deed poll and made quite a fuss of it.

I have an Irish passport through my mother, who had an Irish grandparent, so she could register as an Irish citizen then register her children. I got one about 1986, through a loophole that was later closed off. She paid quite a lot of money for all the documentation. I have four sisters and a younger brother, but she couldn't do it for everyone, so she had to decide. My brother Bede who was 12 at the time, was the only one who was a cheaper rate, so she did him and me. My sisters have been annoyed about this ever since because we got the Irish passports, which hasn't been a hell of a lot

of use to me, but my brother has lived in England for the last ten years on the basis of his Irish passport.

Because I was an Irish citizen, when my children were born I could go through the same loop and get them citizenship. So all four of them have Irish foreign birth registrations and my son has already lived in Germany twice for a year on the basis of his Irish passport and is very grateful for that. Amazingly one of my sisters recently made contact with the Irish consulate and found out that she could still become an Irish citizen and she did. We still have that legislative link – I’m an Irish citizen and I’m quite chuffed about that. I may never do anything with it, but maybe I will.

When I originally registered my children I was keen to do it bi-culturally, so they had Irish and English names. But when I did our fourth child I had a bit of trouble working out what one of his names would be. I was trying to get an Irish version of Bede, my brother’s name, which obviously hasn’t got an Irish version, so I chose the transliteration of it. I sought advice from the Irish consulate about this and they suddenly reacted, “Oh no, we can’t have this two names business, it has to be the same name as on their New Zealand passport/papers.” So I sent back all the certificates and they issued new ones with only English names, which I thought was pretty tragic really. I took photocopies before I sent them back, though that has sort of undercut, to a degree, the notion they have all got Irish names. But they have as far as I’m concerned.

My attitude to this cultural connection has changed over time. It’s been a development from an intrinsic awareness and moderate interest. When I was at secondary school, St Patrick’s High School in Timaru, there were lots of Brosnahans – who aren’t from our particular families. They had a magazine, the *Mickey Doo Express*, which used to have lot of jokes about Brosnahans in it, which I liked. So there was this special Irishness, and consciousness of this. Over time this has increased.

Because of my historical interest and the fact I’ve made my living as an historian, I have done a lot of histories of other people, but your own history is pretty core. The fact that my people were left out of the story of New Zealand history, as far as I was concerned, I’ve worked to put them back there. A lot of my historical work has been about sectarian incidents. I’m attracted to conflict without enjoying it. I wrote the

definitive analysis about the Boxing Day Riots in 1879 in Christchurch and Timaru over Orange Parades. Though there haven't been very many incidents of overt sectarian conflict in New Zealand, this was one of them, along with the Manchester Martyrs ten years earlier on the West Coast. I've just published a piece about the exclusion of the Christian Brothers and Catholic children in general from public school sports in Dunedin in the 1920s. The countervailing tradition of sectarian harmony is much stronger actually, though I focus on these little incidents. One thing has led to another, I've done a lot of work on Irish immigration, settlement and acculturation in various ways, part of that deepening of a sense of cultural connection.

My employment reflects the cultural connection in a sense. I'm a history curator and this is a museum of social history, it is public history at its finest in a way. This institution, Toitu Otago Settlers Museum, was founded by descendants of Scots Presbyterians who founded Otago, and its founding principles were non-sectarian, with no mention of religion or politics. None the less the people who actually established the place were so much Scottish and Presbyterian that the Irish Catholic Galway people, who could have been members, interestingly didn't feel welcome here. There was a qualification for membership based on when you arrived, and that Galway group did qualify, but not one of them joined. Most of the Irish people wouldn't have qualified because they would have come too late. The Protestant Political Association had its meetings here and the Orange Order occasionally had big conferences here so it was very much a Protestant organisation.

When I came here for my job interview one of the people who interviewed me on the panel was a fellow of Irish Protestant descent, Presbyterian, who grilled me about being a Catholic, and whether I thought I would be able to do justice to Scots Presbyterian history. I was a bit taken aback by this, and was able to assure him that I could do that. But I spent the first nineteen years here without ever doing any Irish Catholic history in any exhibitions. We got on pretty well in the end, myself and that chap. But he had laid it on the line, once upon a time I would not have been considered and he was really making the case that I should not be considered then. The other people on the panel, one of whom was a former moderator of the Presbyterian church, were aghast at his opinions and were quick to say they were best friends with the

Catholic bishop, Bishop Leonard Boyle, so it didn't go down too well in that environment. But I sort of took note of it quite sharply as a sign of that enduring sectarian division.

I did the exhibition *Erin Go Bragh* on the Irish in Otago and Southland a few years. It went down pretty well and it reflected both the Protestant and the Catholic traditions. I suppose my religious identity reflects an Irish cultural connection too – I'm a practicing Catholic. Though the Catholic Church in New Zealand has a lot of amnesia about its Irishness now, I'm very conscious of it.

I'm very keen on Irish music. If you look in my iPod there's a lot of stuff in Irish on there. It's hard to get here, but if I come across something I really like I import CDs from overseas. I've also been to a lot of folk club concerts when they have had Irish singers who come out on a tour of the country. I remember a top Uilleann pipe player who came out here, a guy from Kerry, Seamus Begley. One of his CDs has a Brosnahan song. I like other music as well, but I do particularly like Irish Irish music. Lasairfhiona Ni Chonaola is a very gifted young Irish singer and Liam O'Manláí a singer in a rock band called Hothouse Flowers, which I really like, put out a solo album in Irish a few years ago called *Rian*. Apparently he sings in Galway Irish. It's not very clear, but it's very good. Hothouse Flowers sing a really cracking version of "Si Do Mhaimeo" which is absolutely outstanding, my kids love it too.

My mother's mother was an O'Neil from County Kerry and we've had a couple of family reunions with that family, but we discovered that there were members of the family still on the original farm. Some had gone to America, some had come here. So we made a reconnection with the people on the farm and my sister has actually been there since then. But a new relation, a Presentation sister from the convent in Tralee came out to New Zealand, touring around the country. She came down here and stayed at the Presentation sister's convent at Green Island so I took our children out to see her. We sang "Oro Se do Bheatha Bhaile" and she thought it was pretty cool the kids singing that.

A Scottish parliamentary delegation came here last year. When they came to New Zealand the one place they wanted to go, apart from going to Wellington and speaking

to people about political systems, was the Otago Settlers Museum. Our waiata group, the Dunedin City Council group, sang a welcome to them and I prevailed upon them to not only sing a waiata but also to have ready a second song, “A Man’s a Man for All That” for them. They all joined in and loved it. We were having a snuff box from Robbie Burns handed over to us.

I got the waiata group to learn “Ora Se do Bheatha Abhaile,” so that when we had the Irish exhibition opening, with the Irish ambassador from Australia and the Irish Consul General, we sang that and interposed it with a Maori song called “Ko Tou Rourou,” a song about sharing cultural traditions. The basic thrust is the whakatauki it is based on; “From my food basket and your food basket all the people will be fed.” We sang a verse of that and then the first line of the chorus of “Ora Se do Bheatha Abhaile,” then the second verse, and carried on like that and finished with the final chorus. I’ve done that myself on a marae in Wellington, at the Irish conference we had a couple of years ago. I had to take people onto the marae at Victoria University and I gave my korero and then sang that mixed together version.

I’m a bit dubious whether there is an Irish cultural connection in New Zealand society, or the Kiwi psyche, and I’ve thought about this hard. There was a television documentary series a few years ago called *Here to Stay* and they interviewed me for the Irish programme. One of the important things about Irish Catholic history is the education system. When I did the exhibition I thought, “Hang on a minute, who actually erected and funded a complete school system on their own?” The Scots go on about their educational past, but they didn’t do it on their own account, they suborned the general tax take, and when they did establish schools later in the piece they were elite schools, whereas our schools weren’t, they might be becoming elite but they weren’t initially. So education was a really key thing. Irish Catholics sacrificed enormously to create and sustain that and since they haven’t had to sacrifice to sustain it, with integration into the state system, the whole Irish Catholic identity has just evaporated like a balloon that has been pricked.

I grew up in a very Catholic environment which at any earlier point was very Irish Catholic and in my life time it transmuted into New Zealand Catholicism and lost a lot of trappings of Irishness. I came along at the tail end of the old ways as Vatican Two

happened when I was just a little boy. The old church was still there, with large numbers of Mercy sisters, I was taught by the sisters and the Marist brothers and the Marist fathers. I'm currently writing a history of the parish so I'm digging deep into all of that and bringing to that my wider knowledge of Irish migration.

Even up to the point where the schools were still struggling along, the church was ethnically defined, but it is not so much an ethnically conscious entity any more. Maybe it would have happened anyway – I'm not saying there's a cause and effect here, but once the struggle was no longer there, when they'd won the battle and had integration into the state system, it evaporated. There's no sense of Irish Catholic-ness about our schools. My kids go to Kavanagh College, Dunedin's Catholic secondary school, and every now and then they'll do a little nod towards this heritage thing, but the cultural thing they stress all the time is Maori. They've got to go for the biculturalism. When they have their end of year assemblies, the head kids get up and they have to say prayers in Maori. While I've got no objection to it, they never have any Irish; they never have any reference to it. So that whole sense of our identity is lost. They'll have pipers come in to the school, though that's the Scots thing.

The church used to be the carrier of Irishness. Even though it wasn't intrinsically in itself Irish, it was characterised by the people and that was the link. So that has sort of gone. The Irish component in society has become debased into Irish pubs which are a commercial enterprise and not really connected to identity at all, but play on it. Irish music is no longer an exclusively Irish possession. It belongs to everybody just like all music does, so anybody can be interested in Irish music, and fair play to them, I have no problem with that, but there's nothing actually that carries Irishness through Kiwi culture.

It's very hard now to imagine your children sustaining Catholic identity into the future. I've watched in my own community over the years my generation disappearing so that our church is full of old people and the young ones. Kids that go to Catholic schools don't go to Catholic churches so there's a whole falling away of that. Once upon a time you could have pointed to the Catholic school system but it's bogus to think that it's even very Catholic now. I know people at schools try very hard but they're working against a system where about five percent of the children at a Catholic school

are really Catholics, people who have been catechised and who actually practise and know what it means. All the rest are pagans who have got a Catholic heritage.

The Kiwi psyche to me is these days very materialistic, and this goes back, if you look into our literary traditions there was “a man alone” thread running through our society, spiritually. I know that being a Catholic in New Zealand you are really swimming against the tide, as there’s nothing that supports spiritual beliefs. With my students at Otago University we were recently doing a seminar where they had to look at letters from a Scottish Presbyterian founding member of the society. They were struck with his religious beliefs and how important they were to him. In fact he mentioned he prayed for people. To them this was a very exotic sort of thing. I thought that just shows how you have lost that part of your tradition, that they find prayer so alien. I pray for people all the time because that’s still part of our tradition.

So no, I can’t really think of any characteristics or behaviours that stem from the Irish cultural connection. Though having said that, our family, our extended family life, my sisters and our family, is a very Irish. The way we relate to each other is still marked by that formation even though it’s not explicit, in the manner and characteristics of how we treat each other. We are very loving and very hard on each other as well. We give each other a pretty hard time but are absolutely supportive of each other. We might attack each other at times, but as soon as anyone else attacks us we come together.

I’ve really become quite conscious of that difference through having married into another tradition. My wife is from a Scottish background and she kind of likes the way we do things, but she can’t do it. She likes the idea of it, but she reverts to her Scottish Presbyterian ways. That lively fight-laugh-cry, that’s our family life; it is very vibrant. We’re connected, and we’re in communication pretty regularly. My mother uses email, whereas my wife who lives here with her family all around her might not have anything to do with them for months at a time. They’re very nice people, they come together quite often, but they’re all very decorous and polite. They don’t really say anything about what they feel. They wouldn’t cry with each other, whereas we can imagine crying at or because of each other quite easily. I think about funerals too. My wife’s parents have both died and I went to both funerals, in fact I did the funeral for her

father. They didn't shed tears, or hardly at all, but when my parents die it's going to be a tear storm. That whole wake thing.

I went to my grandparents' wakes when I was about 10. They both died within a couple of months of each other. We had these huge day-long things after the requiem, lying in state in the convent in Timaru, a hugely impressive building which was demolished in 1983. They said the rosary there and the funeral, with all the school children lined up along the road. All the family and friends were coming to our house all day, there was food and drink – it wasn't drunken, it was just very lively. There were stories too. Then I go to my wife's family: They have sausage rolls and tea and a quiet wee talk and everyone goes off.

It is more like Maori tangi, and we're very tribal too. I'm always getting grief from my wife and other people about the way I call people "cousin." I have thousands of cousins in New Zealand on all my family's sides and I am happy to acknowledge them. I don't say they're my "third cousin once removed." They're related, we share the same blood lines, and that's whakapapa, it's the tribal link, it's the Galway people, or the Kerry people, where we connect back to. I have a real sense of that. My immersion in Maori culture down here has shown me that, though I'm aware southern Maori culture is quite different to northern Maori culture. I've been really pleased to become engaged with that from a point of strength. Quite a few Pakeha people who have become very keen on Maori things, do so sometimes from a point of cultural weakness. They try to gain cultural strength from the other tradition, instead of getting strength from their own tradition. I can enjoy singing Maori songs and speaking Maori, I really enjoy the ceremony of marae situations, but it's all very familiar to me as an Irish person, and from a liturgical situation, so I'm not trying to be something I'm not, I'm trying to be what I am.

As far as I know my family at Kerrytown didn't ever have anything to do with the Maori people across the river. The early Irish people who came out here were quite racist. For instance one of the family was nicknamed "the tan man" because he went up to the North Island and married a Maori woman. So we have a whole family of Maori Brosnahans. When I was doing my family history interviews a cousin of theirs, who had never actually met them, was still from that tradition of mentioning this Maori



connection very quietly. But she was actually redeemed from that when she met them. They are quite a distinguished bunch, they were all in the army; some served in Malaya.

I remember coming across one of them when I was at university reading about high Maori crime rates. I read about this Joseph Patrick Brosnahan, a young Maori army officer who had realised that young Maori offenders in the courts in Wellington were not being adequately represented, so he did something about it. I didn't know at the time he was my cousin, though I've since met him. Some Ngati Kahungunu people came to the Dunedin art gallery once and I had to welcome them, so I could talk about my Kahungunu Brosnahan relations.

A couple of years ago I stayed overnight for karate, at the Arowhenua Marae, in Temuka. The meeting house at Arowhenua is called Te Hapa o Niu Tireni, which means something like "The Dispossessed of New Zealand," and was established round the issue of the land and loss of land. During the night, on the marae I got up and talked about how we were from across the river and this was just down the road. I was from the Irish folk from across the river and it was really good to connect up like that. Definitely the Irish cultural tradition does offer a way into understanding of Maori colonisation, because we have that tradition of oppression from the English. Though we came out here and did the same thing under the English umbrella too. We got the land from Maori dispossession, so that's why I acknowledge them too. We had the land over the river, so I said, "We benefited from your loss." That irony does connect us in a way.

## The Generations Pass

Returning to my question “What Celtic or Gaelic traditions are there in Aotearoa/New Zealand now ?”: Time is a key factor in answering this because “now” quickly becomes “the past.” In the five years it has taken to formally research and write this there has been change in the lives of the people who generously shared their life experience. By the time of publication Ann Corry and her husband had sold Helean Kilts; Evelyn Entwistle had moved past the time in her life when she could teach Scots Gaelic and John Hunt had retired from his Christchurch parish.

What do these oral history interview narratives offer to answer my questions? They offer insights into individual lives, but they record more than that, they encompass communities of different kinds: geographic, cultural including language, music, singing and dance; sporting and business communities. These small scale ethnographies provide insights into communities over a time period of a hundred and fifty years and more.

Scottish born Evelyn and Bob Entwistle in Dunedin were integrally involved for decades with the Gaelic choir, and the Gaelic Society, which ran for about 125 years, only closing about 10 years ago. Evelyn, who has a Highland background, wrote its history in her book *History of the Gaelic Society of New Zealand 1881 to 1981*, recording the cultural traditions of music and song and the social functions of visiting the sick and elderly. Keri Hulme provides insight into the trails that Maori walked and boated along the South Island’s east coast, trading pounamu and seasonal foods. Her mother’s grandfather came to this coastal area from the largest of the Orkney Islands, the family living firstly in the Dunedin area then further north in Oamaru. Her great aunts who married two Maori brothers later linked the family with Kati Mamoe and Kai Tahi in Karitane and Waikouaiti.

Kathleen Gallagher describes her Irish family in Christchurch and earlier generations on the West Coast, recorded in *The Gallaghers of Cronadun*, written first with her father, and later updated with cousins. Members of the family have married into different European cultural groups and also Maori families. Dublin-born Evey McAuliffe’s life in the Nelson area ties her closely to earlier generations of Irish migrants. The Irish culture group she organised at her daughter’s school later performed a showcase of Irish

culture at a North Island arts festival, organised with her husband, musician Bob Bickerton. The children were all of Irish descent drawn from the Todd Valley area where Evey and her family lived.

Evelyn McCormack, who has a Queens Service Medal for her services to genealogy, spent several decades collecting stories of early residents of the Ulster settlement of Katikati, where Evelyn herself grew up, established first in the mid 1870s. Bain McGregor's great grandparents came as part of the Nova Scotia Scots who settled in Waipu in the 1850s. He has been involved with the community all his life, mowing lawns at the museum, participating in the Highland Games, as the pipe major for the local pipe band and as the chief of the Caledonian Society. Charlie Dunn of Ngati Rawara iwi, in Northland, provides insight into several generations of his family around the Hokianga, who have Irish, Scottish and English cultural connections. His family struggle to gain control of and to develop family land and Te Rarawa iwi land around the Hokianga Harbour, ironically echoes the Irish struggle to control and develop their own land.

These interviews record that Irish and Scots Gaelic has been taught and learned here in New Zealand in more recent decades, in public and private spaces. At a time when there is much publicity about the difficulty of keeping Scottish and Irish Gaelic as living languages in Ireland and Scotland it seems reason to celebrate that both languages are being spoken and sung here, in limited ways admittedly, for personal reasons. A young Irish woman in Christchurch, a fluent speaker of Irish Gaelic, kindly assisted me with the language when I first presented this PhD research inquiry in Melbourne.

Evelyn Entwistle learned Scots Gaelic in Dunedin, taught Gaelic songs in the Gaelic choir before it closed, and later taught it at high school evening classes, an institute of technology, and privately. Michael Godley from Christchurch who learned from a teacher from the Isle of Harris in the Hebrides, estimates 150 people went through his Scots Gaelic classes. Laura Mills from the West Coast plans that her sons, who are New Zealand-born, will learn Scottish from their grandmother, now that the environment in Scotland is more supportive of the use of Scottish and Scots Gaelic. Evey McAuliffe was involved with Irish classes in Nelson. She sings Irish history in

Irish, and teaches the songs to New Zealanders of Irish background, among others, in her group *Caidre*.

Sean Brosnahan in Dunedin learned enough Irish from a book he purchased off Amazon to read and sing song lyrics in Irish. He has taught his children songs in Irish and hopes they will sing one over him at his funeral. He has also taught members of his waiata group a Maori song interspersed line by line with an Irish song. Marianne Hepple learned Irish Gaelic at Continuing Education classes at Auckland University, then at the Auckland Irish Society, from a Belfast-born teacher. Charlie and Jan Dunn describe the lilting tone and the use of “t” for “th” in Thursday that still runs through some of the members of the family, echoes of earlier family members. Irish Gaelic classes have been offered in Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland.

There are some strong business connections such as Highland born Fraser Milne, whose father worked as a grain merchant in an area of Scotland with a very high concentration of distilleries, and who now runs a thriving whisky importing business in Christchurch. He is linked to a global network of Scottish business people

Ann Corry, the first woman in the southern hemisphere to hold a Scottish kilt making qualification, has been involved with making kilts for nearly 50 years. She went to work at Helean Kilts in Dunedin, in 1963, bought the company with her husband in 1989 and they sold it in 2013 to retire.

From a Southland family of pipers and dancers, Ann Corry, has herself been a dancer and judge for over 48 years. Her daughter was a drummer for the City of Dunedin pipe band before moving to South Canterbury to Temuka, where she plays in the local pipe band.

Respect for the power of words and of story, deeply held in Gaelic societies, informs Booker Prize winner Keri Hulme’s family background and her writing. Michael O’Leary has written the *Irish Annals of New Zealand* in a style reminiscent of James Joyce, with English, Maori, Irish Gaelic, and other languages tumbling over each other. Poet Bernadette Hall recalls a Dunedin Irish community where after World War One there were signs for jobs in shop windows, for which “Catholics need not apply.” She feels her Irishness gives her “a standing ground” and validates that voice “the

independent voice of the outsider.” A poet, in the Irish tradition, Kathleen Gallagher has written about her family, in *The Gallaghers of Cronadun*, first with her father and later with cousins. She is a director of Wickcandle Films, where with her husband, she creates films in which people tell spiritual, social and environmental stories.

A master carver, Malcolm Adams, who describes himself as a Pacific Celt, creates carvings drawing on mythologies of Celtic traditions melded with Polynesian and Maori cultures. Denis O’Connor’s life as a visual artist has drawn deeply on aspects of his father’s and mother’s sense of Irishness and also from his daughter’s return to Ireland taking with her knowledge and experience from “the new world” to “the old world.”

Marianne Hepple, a Uilleann piper, finds her knowledge and understanding of the sound of Irish Gaelic helps her to play the pipes. Bain McGregor’s piping career has made a significant contribution to piping in New Zealand and the competition named for his first wife, Helen McGregor, offers opportunities for younger pipers.

In terms of religion and spirituality Presbyterian minister John Hunt’s ministry has been influenced by his experience and study of Celtic spirituality. He has affirmed the essential goodness of each person, and the power of nature to strengthen and heal, as the presence of God in creation, a theology that was banned from Rome centuries ago. Ann Dooley finds holiness and power in Roman Catholic rituals surrounding death, similar to the power of the Maori tradition of the tangi.

Some sporting traditions are well integrated here. Stewart McKnight’s grandfather was a founding member of a curling club in Central Otago. His father curled and he has curled all his life, so he represents a connection to over a hundred years of curling in New Zealand. It was being played here in the 1870s. Over time the sport that has moved beyond the cold Central Otago environment, with a club even in Auckland. It has opened its ranks to women curlers and now with indoor rinks there is curling all year round, although the Bonspeil, Scottish for grand match, is still a significant gathering, on the Idaburn dam in the Maniototo, in Central Otago.

Robert Consedine reminds us that former Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, supported the work of the Waitangi Tribunal because he knew his own Irish history. Robert, who grew up in the working class Irish suburb of Addington in Christchurch, has invested

much of his life in encouraging people to look at their own life histories and understand how the power dynamics within these have affected Maori as tangata whenua in Aotearoa/New Zealand and later Aboriginals in Australia.

The Waipu Museum holds the stories of a group of Scottish migrants to New Zealand via Nova Scotia and Patsy Montgomery as director of the museum works to keep these available to the wider community. As an archivist at Toitu Otago Settlers Museum in Dunedin, Sean Brosnahan works with Scottish and Irish heritages in Otago and Southland. He has written his own Irish family's chain migration story into New Zealand history in his *The Kerrytown Brosnahans*.

Another question I asked was "What is there in the Kiwi psyche, if anything, that relates to the Gaels who have settled here?" Potentially stereotypical notions admittedly, but ones that people responded to. A conservatism or reserve influenced by Scottish Presbyterianism, a tendency not to criticise or challenge authority, with an underlying aggressiveness. Ingenuity and inventiveness, the number eight wire attitude. Egalitarian attitudes, though this has changed as New Zealand society has been influenced by wider economic influences: The trickle-down theory has not created an equitable society. Hospitality, a willingness to open your home to strangers. The ability to have a good time. Strong family ties, extended family, valuing whakapapa. Repeatedly articulated by and about people with an Irish Catholic background is the importance of gathering family and friends at the time of a death.

Many traditions have moved through the generations and are still very much alive here: Food for example, like oats, potatoes, soups, scones and potato cakes. Fraser Milne was surprised to find Cullen Skink soup. Names and the pronunciation of names travel through the generations. Fraser Milne describes a *quaich*, a traditional welcoming cup made here of pohutakawa wood.

My final question, "Has the experience of colonisation which the Irish and Scots have both experienced, in the northern hemisphere homelands, affected how they have

related to Maori in the colonising of this country?” All the prejudices and power which fuelled the harsh colonial histories of Ireland and Scotland have been revisited on Maori in the colonisation of New Zealand. The army of the empire and the mechanisms of government policy alienated Maori from their land, communities, their language and resources. Some of the laws imposed on Maori were used first in Ireland and Scotland. In conversation individuals repeatedly acknowledged that Scots and Irish were part of the colonial fighting forces and that generations of immigrants benefited by gaining ownership of land. Michael O’Leary offers a counter narrative to this in his song about an Irish militiaman deserting because he saw and felt the similarities between Maori defending their own land and the struggle of Irish. There were however repeated observations that the oppressed becomes the oppressor. Racist attitudes linger through the generations into the present.

But within individual stories there are people for whom perhaps the understanding of and respect for ties of blood and family, clan, tribe and land, held as precious in Maori and Gaelic societies, contributed to enabling them to embark on successful and satisfying relationships across the ethnic groups despite racist attitudes held in wider society. Others spoke of grandchildren who share mixed cultural backgrounds including Maori and the importance of supporting them in acquiring te reo.

These are stories too of multiple generations, some looking back six or seven generations, others looking forward through children and grandchildren. The ease of international flight enables many to return to their northern hemisphere family regularly. Skype and online communication make the distance easier for family and friends to maintain relationships around the world. Membership and involvement with cultural groups and organisations fluctuate, but these traditions are being taken up in other ways, like the small South Canterbury town of Hororata re-inventing itself around local Highland Games.

As a teacher of English as an additional language for over thirty years I know that New Zealand now welcomes immigrants and refugees from every continent in the world. These newer groups join older settler groups like the Irish and the Scots, adding their own richness to our communities.

## **Coda**

While these are stories from Aotearoa/New Zealand they echo stories of Irish and Scottish people who have settled for generations in other countries such as Australia, Canada and the United States.

These narratives are snapshots in time: like the image of my father, his brother and twin sisters dancing in the Scottish Hall in Oamaru, North Otago. They are offered in celebration for the generations who have passed on, and the languages and cultural traditions that live on in this country and make themselves anew here in the South Pacific. Also for the new generations who will carry traditions into the future in different ways. Through energy, intelligence and creativity, underpinned by the unerring if unpredictable power of genetics: The spirals of life continue.



# Southern Celts

AN INVESTIGATION OF HOW PEOPLE WITH A CELTIC/GAELIC BACKGROUND  
LIVE OUT THEIR TRADITIONS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

# Southern Celts: The Exegesis

## Chapter One: Introduction

What shall we sing? Sings Harry

Sing all things sweet or harsh upon

These islands in the Pacific sun

Denis Glover (1971, from 'Sings Harry' 1951)

We get our voices from the voices of others ... Our stories are created  
from a multiplicity of witness. Colum McCann, *Zoli* (2006, p. 277).

*Southern Celts* is a narrative inquiry about how women and men from Irish and Scottish cultural backgrounds live out their cultural connection to the homelands in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. They include people born in the northern hemisphere homelands and those who have had families for many generations in this country. This inquiry is an exploration of the discursive construction of cultural identity, informed by cultural theorist Chris Weedon's understandings that cultural identity is "neither one thing nor static... it is constantly produced and reproduced in practices of everyday life, education, the media, the museum and heritage sectors, the arts, history and literature" (2004, p. 155). The interviews I have collected are the heart of the inquiry and this exegesis explores the creative processes which have enabled me to integrate them into a book of interview narratives that constitutes a multi-voiced narrative.

The interviews or "cultural narratives" that I collected to explore answers to my questions are described by Weedon as, "sites from which we learn about others," (2004, p. 115). They provide information about the lives of individuals and their families, but also on related wider social and political issues, in New Zealand, Scotland and Ireland. I have also written about my extended family and my own experience as the

granddaughter of three Irish-born grandparents, and one born to Irish immigrant parents in New Zealand, connecting these to wider political, historical and social issues, in Ireland and New Zealand (see Artefact, Introduction). Autoethnographer Heewon Chang argues that making explicit connections to broader social issues is integral to using one's own life as data for academic research, and I have tried to do that, aiming to apply "critical, analytical and interpretive eyes" to personal experience, mine and others as Chang (2008, p. 49) recommends. From a social science perspective she believes autoethnography "intends to expand the understanding of social realities through the lens of the researcher's personal experiences" (Chang, 2013, p. 108).

*Southern Celts* uses narrative as both the method of research and the phenomenon of study, with the narratives, mine and the interviewees, being "both lived and told stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 62; Pinnegar & Danes, 2007, p. 5). Through bringing together the experiences of individuals, across generations, I aim to acknowledge the past, explore the present and consider what the future might bring (see Artefact, Introduction). These *Southern Celts* narratives join an increasing number of publications about cultural identities by Maori, Pakeha, Pacific, Asian and many other individuals, groups and communities in Aotearoa (Ip 2008, 2009; Ip & Pang, 2005; King, 1999; Mallon, Mahina-Tuai, & Salesa, 2012; Teaiwa & Mallon, 2005; Walker, 1990; Wanhalla, 2009). Like former race relations conciliator, Joris de Bres, I believe that respect for diversity, for the value or *mana* of each person and group in our society, is a way forward to an inclusive national identity (Liu, Creanor, McIntosh, & Teaiwa, 2005, p. 292). Sociologists Liu et al. claim when telling stories as a nation, or as individuals, we are working with a dynamic and multi-layered process of negotiating identity, often multiple identities (2005, p. 14), I too believe the narratives in *Southern Celts* provide insight into interviewees' multiple identities and how they have negotiated and nurtured their Scottish and Irish cultural identities. I am aware that a Scottish or Irish cultural background is only one aspect of each narrator's life, an understanding supported by narrative theorist Mishler (2006, p. 41) who writes that we have multiple identities, each rooted in a different set of relationships "that form the matrix of our lives." His is "a relational concept" of identity,

One that locates the recurrent restorying of our lives within the flux of contradiction and tensions of the several social worlds in which we are simultaneously actors and respondents to others' actions (Mishler, 2006, p. 42).

These interview narratives are rich with insights as narrators restory aspects of their lives, though it is important to acknowledge, as Seidman does (2006, p. 129), that these representations “frame and reify” the lives of narrators which continue on in time beyond the frame of these texts. Taking that into account I hope that through reading these personal and social histories and herstories readers may gain more nuanced understandings of the New Zealand society of the past, as well as of today, possibly of what the future might hold, and also insights as to how to live into the future. I see this inquiry as a contribution to the use of narrative methodology and methods, particularly creative methods, in the scholarly endeavour of research and elucidation of knowledge.

## ***Narrative***

### **An instinct for recording life stories**

*Southern Celts* has been nurtured by my family background, as well as my instinctive valuing and pleasure in writing and recording others' experiences. I have collected life stories: my mother and father as children of Irish immigrants, a much loved uncle, women about their spirituality (Kearney, 1997) and for paying clients in my own small oral history service. All my adult life I've written professionally: as a journalist, a researcher, an editor, and as an academic. I have instinctively made sense of experience through the process of writing, or “Writing as Method” as sociologist Laurel Richardson describes in the context of qualitative research (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). This will be further developed in Chapter Three in discussion of decisions I made about representing the interviews.

### **Narrative in literature**

Writers and scholars across time and cultural contexts have used narrative in a variety of forms, to engage with life. The eighth century Old English poem *Beowulf* (Wrenn & Bolton, 1973) and Old English poems, “The Wanderer” and “The Seafarer” (Cassidy & Ringler, 1971), have held power for me over nearly forty years. They speak to me

across millenia of human experience: the importance of relationships and belonging in a community, the longing for home, the familiar environment and loved ones. As a student of *Beowulf* in 1978 I took pleasure in focusing on a word in the text, weighing it for meaning, discussing it, listening to the sound of the Anglo Saxon word, guided by a teacher who herself was sensitive to these issues. In this research too, taking pleasure in both the sound and tone of the voices of interviewees has influenced my choices about representing the oral interviews: a process echoed for me in the experience of Irish poet and Nobel laureate, Seamus Heaney which he describes in his more recent translation of *Beowulf* (2008). There is further discussion of the issue of voice in Chapter Three.

### Narrative in academic contexts

De Fina & Georgakopoulou (2012, p. 2) explain that Narratology, which is the study of narrative as a genre, approaches narrative as *a text-type*, and focuses on defining “story” through analysing definitional criteria, generally assuming the criteria are universally applicable and can thus be theorised. Accompanying this is also a tradition of narrative *as mode* in which theorists such as Ricoeur, aspects of whose work I will analyse in a later chapter, view narrative as fundamental to human cognition and understanding of the world. These understandings informed a “narrative turn” in the 1980s which emphasized human experience, and a narrative epistemology that recognises and accepts different kinds of human inquiry, a counter to more strict scientific ways of thinking and researching. It encourages researchers to maintain a high degree of reflexivity. Narrative discourses are used across a range of disciplines such as Sociology and Psychology, and this inquiry draws on the work of several of the scholars who have published in these areas. Other disciplines to use narrative methods and analysis are Education, Anthropology and History (De Fina & Georgakopoulou, 2012, pp. 17-18).

The work of educationalists Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Clandinin (2007) underpin this inquiry, particularly through the use of their three frames of narrative inquiry: time (past, present and future), place and the intersection of the personal and the social. In this three dimensional inquiry space the researcher is positioned alongside other participants in the inquiry “visible in our own lived and told stories” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 62), thus I am explicitly part of the narratives in my own story and

an implicit influence on all aspects of the inquiry. This inquiry is also informed by postmodern, poststructuralist understanding which will be discussed later in more detail. Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) identify a tension between poststructuralist researchers and narrative inquirers, since for poststructuralists, narrative knowledge “has an entirely discursive provenance,” while for narrative inquirers such as Clandinin and Connelly the inquiry begins with “a pragmatic ontology that treats lived experience as the beginning and ending points of the inquiry” (cited in Clandinin & Rosiek 2007, p. 55). For myself, I can celebrate the very real lives that these narratives represent, while at the same time understand and explore how they illustrate a discursive construction of cultures and identities.

In wider educational frames Trahar (2009) applies a narrative inquiry paradigm and autoethnographic methods to her research into intercultural learning and teaching. Lillis (2008) explores ethnography as methodology using ethnographic insights in her research into academic writing. Narrative as methodology and method is becoming more commonly used in my own discipline of Applied Linguistics (Barkhuizen, 2013; Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014). Vasquez (2011, p. 536) recommends teachers of English as an Additional Language focus on “small stories,” or stories told in everyday conversational contexts, which offer insight into teachers’ and learners’ situated social identities. She contrasts this to the current privileging of “big stories” such as autobiographical narratives and researcher elicited narratives.

Beyond my own discipline, my reading of Jungian psychoanalyst and *Canadora*, keeper of old stories, Dr Estes’ PhD work (1992), which explores how women might use story to engage their inner strength, has been an enriching engagement with narrative. Likewise James Haywood Rolling Jr.’s life history and narrative research about his relationship with three fathers “through a filigree of remembrances” holds power and resonance for me (Bathmaker & Harnett, 2010, p. 144).

### **‘Reconstructing the told from the telling’**

There has been an associated development of narrative analysis methods and theories, including in the work of Polkinghorne (1995, 2007) whose earlier 1995 analysis has assisted me in this inquiry, discussed later in Chapter Three. Narrative theorist Mishler

has also provided significant insights for this inquiry. His typology of three models of narrative analysis has been particularly influential. These are: *narrative reference*, which deals with the relations between events and their representation; *narrative structure*, referring to textural coherence; and thirdly *narrative function*, the work done by or the problem-solving function of narrative strategies (as cited in Daiute & Lightfoot, 2004, p. 253). I see myself working within Mishler's *narrative function* frame, retelling or reconstructing a "telling from the told": the telling being interviews, the told the interview narratives.

### ***Southern Celts: Why the Irish and the Scots?***

My initial plan was to interview people with Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Cornish and Breton cultural backgrounds, arguably all Southern Celts: "southern" meaning "southern hemisphere" where Aotearoa is in the south west Pacific; and Celts, northern hemisphere tribes who spread across Europe to the Atlantic Coast of what is now Spain, France, England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland (Oppenheimer, 2006). The origins of the Celts are discussed briefly in the artefact introduction. The autoethnographic impulses which underpin this research showed themselves early on when after interviewing five people, at the Auckland Welsh Choir, I felt as I transcribed the interviews that I did not have the same sense of connection to Welsh culture as I did to Irish and Scottish cultures. Autoethnographers Ellis and Bochner write that autoethnographers gaze back and forth "first through an ethnographic wide-angle lens, focusing outward on social and cultural aspects of their personal experience; then they look inward..." (2000, p. 739). But I could not "look inwards" to any sense of connection to what it might be to have a Welsh cultural background, nor Cornish or Breton backgrounds. So for personal and professional reasons I decided to interview only Gaels, Irish and Scots. Through my professional background as a teacher of English as an Additional Language for 30 years, with a particular interest in sociolinguistics, I knew the Irish and the Scots share a language, Gaelic, originally spoken in Ireland (Markdale, 1993; O'Neill, 2005). Given the geographic proximity of their homelands they share a long history of migration back and forth across the sea that separates them (Oppenheimer, 2006). The distinction between "Celt" and "Gael" is discussed in the artefact introduction.

Both cultures were part of my home environment (see Artefact, Introduction). I reflect there that memories are not always an accurate recall of the past, mine or my parents. As autoethnographer Tessa Muncey explains, sharing family memories does not necessarily uncover “verifiable truth” (2010, p. 102), but I believe these memories have value for us never-the-less, because they help create our lives. Memory is integral to all of these narratives and I return to the impact of memory in Chapter Two, with a longer discussion of cultural memory in Chapter Four.

### Challenges to use of the term “Celt”

In very early stages of this inquiry a New Zealand historian, a specialist in the Irish and Scots in New Zealand, cautioned against the use of the word “Celts,” recounting that in his academic circles the term conjured images of crystal-waving, “new age” devotees (Paterson, in conversation, August 2010). Despite this attitude held by some New Zealand historians, and clearly described in Welsh journalist Marcus Tanner’s (2004) detailed analysis of romanticism surrounding the Celts, I have proceeded because of my own experience and understandings. This process was illuminated for me by Jane Gallop (2002) who argues that paying attention to seemingly tangential “incidents” which happen in life, around the research endeavour, can be fruitful for the process. At a popular Celtic Summer School in Northland in 1999, well before I had formally begun this PhD inquiry, I experienced no crystal waving, but porridge early in the morning, workshops on languages, music, dance and sharing of histories during the day, while each evening a *ceilidh* brought together hundreds of people, where infants and young children were settled quietly in a corner to sleep, while the dancing and the high energy music continued (NZ Gaidhealtachd). (see Artefact, Introduction). That experience showed me there are people in New Zealand who are exploring their cultural backgrounds, comfortable, as I am, to acknowledge an aspect of their identity as “Celtic.” The idea of the “Celts” also has currency here in New Zealand, given that in the 2006 census 1,506 identified as “Celtic” (Te Ara/ New Zealand Encyclopedia, 2012).

In another incident, a visiting Scottish academic told me Scots would not view themselves as “Celts” but in terms of their national identity, as “Scottish.” I have proceeded with my choice of the term, understanding that the distance from the



homelands, here in the Pacific, allows me a wider, more layered sense of identity. Reflecting on these two incidents illustrates for me the complexity around cultural identity/ies: also that identities can change over time and are influenced by a myriad of experiences.

### Irish and Scottish diaspora

British historian of Welsh background, Norman Davies (2000, pp. 82-83) writes that the huge diaspora of Celts around the world “long divided by oceans and continents both from each other and their ancestral homelands are now being reunited by modern transport and communications” with the growth of the internet able to connect scattered communities. He notes that on the internet “academic offerings are as serious and diverse as the commercial ones” (Davies, 2000, p. 83). Two websites give a glimpse of the activities of modern Celts. An opportunity to explore the potential for collaborative research and discussion about Celtic issues is offered in an online environment, which holds videos of research forum proceedings from *Celtic Identity in the New Millennium* (State University of New York, 2009). Guilford College, in Carolina, USA, offers a credit-bearing summer school programme entitled *Celtic Culture and Identity*, where students spend three weeks studying in Edinburgh and then a week of field work in Dublin (Guilford College, n.d.).

Looking to Aotearoa, historian Patrick O’Farrell (2000) quotes Irish President, Mary Robinson’s statistic of 70,000,000 people of Irish background around the world, in his article about New Zealand settlement. Currently over half a million out of approximately four and a half million New Zealanders have Irish ancestry, according to the Encyclopedia of New Zealand (Te Ara, 2015). In his book on the Irish in New Zealand between 1860 and 1950, Donald Harman Akenson (1990) points out the difficulty of estimating numbers of Irish migrants to New Zealand because Irish people left from English and Scottish ports and may have been recorded as such, while many came through Australia. He notes that after the partition of Ireland in 1921, into the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland, it is not clear necessarily what “Ireland” meant.

For the Scots, New Zealand scholar Tom Brooking writes, in his introduction to *The Heather and the Fern: Scottish Migration and New Zealand Settlement* (Brooking &

Coleman, 2003) that the Scots were about 21 percent of nineteenth century migrants and the Irish about 18 percent. In *Scottish Ethnicity and the Making of New Zealand Society 1850-1930* Tanja Bueltmann estimates that the Scots made up at least a fifth of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century migrants to New Zealand. While Te Ara Encyclopedia does not give a national statistic for people with a Scottish background in New Zealand, it could be assumed, given Brooking's statistic, that the current number would be higher than that of people with an Irish background. Te Ara (2015) does record that less than 10% of the two million Scots who emigrated in the century 1840 to 1940 came to New Zealand, yet they were extremely influential.

New Zealand historian James Belich writes that outside Scotland there is probably no other country in the world in which the Scots had more influence: "...New Zealand is the neo-Scotland" (2001, p. 221). However he argues that identifying people through ethnic difference has been difficult in New Zealand, because the use of the word "British" collapsed significant difference amongst English, Scottish, Irish, and particularly Welsh people.

Whatever the number of people who can claim Scottish and Irish ethnic backgrounds in New Zealand, at the Celtic Summer School I loved the cultural experience, the sense of celebration of music, dance and language: a shared inheritance. I felt the recognition of painful pasts. Having lived in Ireland, read Irish history, most instructively with feminist frames (Ward, 1983), and from personal perspectives (Markievicz, 1987; White & Jeffares, 1992) and paid attention to my grandparents' experiences, I had some understanding of the histories of alienation that were shared during the Summer School. I have brought all this to the creation of *Southern Celts*, the artefact and the exegesis and have tried to present the interviews respectfully, aiming to honour my interviewees, my grandparents, parents and families. I intend this inquiry to celebrate that these cultures, so cruelly dislocated by colonisation and other influential social factors, are strong enough to survive and constantly recreate themselves anew, so far from the homelands.

### ***Practice-led research***

When I began this research process I needed to find a way to integrate my understandings and skills as a former journalist, and an academic researcher, of postmodern, poststructural understandings (Andrew & Kearney, 2006; Kearney & Andrew, 2009), with “a pragmatic ontology of experience” integral to narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). So the practice-led model which “develops as multi-method led by practice,” as Arnold (2007) describes, has enabled me to become an “interpretive bricoleur,” defined by qualitative researchers Denzin and Lincoln as a researcher who brings together a range of tools and insights to his or her research (2005, p. 1084). Drawing on the metaphor of the *bricoleur* Robin Stewart’s (2001, p. 6.) analysis of practitioner-research, describes using multiple methodologies as *bricolage*: “.... a pieced together close knit set of practices providing solutions to a problem in a concrete situation.” The product, likewise called *bricolage*, she describes as “a complex, dense, reflexive collage-like creation that represents the researchers’ stories, representations, understandings and interpretations of the world and the phenomena under investigation,” (Stewart, 2001, p.6) which I consider a fair description of *Southern Celts*. Joe Kincheloe (2001) argues it takes a life time to be a *bricoleur*. All of my life I have loved the process of writing and as an adult I have been constantly practicing the discipline of writing, reaching across genres and disciplines: *Southern Celts* being the latest step.

In this inquiry I bring together reflective interviewing skills (Roulston, 2010; Seidman, 2006), autoethnography (Chang, 2008, 2013; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013; Muncey, 2010; Reed-Danahay, 1997), ethnographic and phenomenological insights (Maddison, 2008; Tedlock, 2000; Van Manen, 1990), writing as a method of inquiry (Adams St. Pierre, 2011; Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005), and understandings drawn from literatures about the construction of culture and identity (Fong & Chuang, 2004; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010; Weedon, 2004). As stated earlier in the chapter, the major tool of analysis is Clandinin and Connelly’s three frames of narrative inquiry: time (past, present and an imagined future); place; and the intersection between the personal and the social (2000). At each step, in this practice-led process (C.Gray, 1996, McNamara, 2012) moving back and forth between the artefact and the exegesis I increasingly became aware of the power of

the three frames to illuminate the richness of the narratives interviewees offered. This will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

### ***Literature***

#### **The narratives: “The sweet and the harsh”**

The artefact presents my autoethnographic introduction, twenty-five interviews and a chapter that reflects on the narratives as responses to the questions posed in the artefact. These narratives are part of the tradition of generations of migrants from varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds who have created Aotearoa/ New Zealand society, based upon the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Liu et al., 2005). (See Interview with Robert Consedine). The interviews record the passage of time and of generations, and constant change, thus richly illustrating cultural theorist Stuart Hall’s understanding that cultural identity is a matter of “becoming” as well as “being,” belonging to the future as much as the past (as cited in Weedon, 2004, p. 52 ). (See Denis O’Connor’s interview which ranges across three generations: his father, himself and his daughter; and Anne Corry’s narrative which moves from great grandparents to her daughter).

Influenced by my stance as a critical researcher, following Norton (2000) for whom critical research incorporates explicit exploration of power relations in society, these *Southern Celts* narratives chronicle the “sweet and harsh” as New Zealand poet Denis Glover writes (1971), quoted at the beginning of this chapter. I find this stance perceptively supported by anthropologist/poet Tierney:

The researcher’s work needs to be more than the stimulation of memory that reaches for easy reminiscence, for if all the researcher is doing is evoking nostalgia for the past irrespective of ideology then he or she has stripped the work of any possibility for change (2000, p. 546).

Discussion of what change that responding to and engaging with the narratives has brought for me, and discussion of what effect it might have for readers will come later in Chapters Three and Four.

## Writing about the Scots and Irish in Aotearoa/New Zealand

*Southern Celts* has been informed by and will feed into work already published in New Zealand and Australia about the Irish and the Scots in New Zealand. These include academic articles, historical analysis, historical fiction, individual, family and community histories and herstories, oral history, poetry and novels. Much of the academic work is done through frames of ethnicity: a recent example is *Counting stories, moving ethnicities: Studies from Aotearoa New Zealand* (2012) edited by Rosalind McLean, Brad Patterson and David Swain, whereas this inquiry is framed as an exploration of the construction of culture/s and cultural identities.

Influential in informing this inquiry has been traditional historiography including: *Half the World from Home: Perspectives on the Irish in New Zealand 1860-1950* (Akenson, 1990), *A Lucky Landing: The Story of the Irish in New Zealand* (Rodgers, 1996), *Far Off in Sunlight Places: Stories of Scots in Australia and New Zealand* (Hewitson, 1998), *The Heather and the Fern: Scottish Migration and New Zealand Settlement* (Brooking & Coleman 2003), *A Distant Shore: Irish Migration and New Zealand Settlement* (Fraser 2000), and *Scottish Ethnicity and the Making of New Zealand Society, 1850-1930* (Bueltmann, 2011). I will specifically look at New Zealander, Professor Angela McCarthy's work on the Scottish and Irish later in the chapter.

There is fiction like Michael O'Leary's *The Irish Annals of New Zealand* (1991) written in the tumbling stream of consciousness style of James Joyce, bringing together both Maori and Irish cultures and later performed as a play in Wellington (See interview with Michael O'Leary). Mixing fact and fiction about Scottish migration is Donald Offwood's *Oatcakes to Otago* (2003) and others which provide strong narratives as well as informative historical contexts. There are two fiction narratives which I found emotionally powerful imaginative engagements with issues which I too have set out to explore either explicitly through an interview question, or that have been an unbidden companions in these six years. Firstly, Gillian Ranstead's *Girlie* (2008), in which the female central character lives with memories of generational violence of Scottish land clearances, while growing up with her family in a Maori community in New Zealand, and eventually finds a way to live her life constructively, negotiating memory, histories, ancestors and dreams. I read her novel as a response to my interview question about the

effects of colonisation. Secondly Tina Makereti's *The Te Rekoku Bone* (2014) tells her story in which Moriori<sup>3</sup> Maori and Irish characters are accompanied by a spirit from past generations that is unable to find release from this physical realm, but which is finally released to join the departed ancestors and find rest. This story embodies my abiding interest in spirituality which I discuss in Chapter Five.

There is poetry by poets who draws on Irish backgrounds like Fiona Farrell who wrote *The Pop Up Book of Invasions* (2007) after her residency in Cork, Ireland and Bernadette Hall's collection *The Lustre Jug* (2009) published after her experience of the same Irish residency (See Bernadette Hall's interview). Glen Colquhoun teams with artist Nigel Brown in an illustrated poem (2009) which imagines Celtic gods meeting with Maori gods in the Pacific. The interview with Kathleen Gallagher reveals that she sees all of creative enterprises, which include writing plays and making films, as poetry.

Historian Michael King's biography of novelist and poet, Janet Frame, *Wrestling with the Angel* (2001) records how her powerful and idiosyncratic voice was informed by her love of language and words supported by her family, her father's parents Scottish-born. The first book of her biography, *To the Is-Land* begins, "The Ancestors – who were they, the myth and the reality... I strengthen the reality or myth of those ancestors each time I recall that Grandma Frame began working in a Paisley cotton mill when she was eight years old..." (1994, p. 4), a clear statement of the porous borders between truth and fiction, a theme explored in this exegesis.

## Methodologies

Different methods employed by more mainstream historiographers have also informed the inquiry. These include Maureen Molloy's *Those Who Speak to the Heart: The Nova Scotian Scots at Waipu 1854-1920* (1991) which explores a specific community of

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<sup>3</sup> A tribal people who came from the same homeland of Hawaiki as did Maori, and who lived on the Chatham Islands group South West of Aotearoa.

Scottish migrants who came to New Zealand via Nova Scotia. The title comes from a letter of one of the Scottish migrants who describes how he misses the close relationships he has left behind. My wish for *Southern Celts* narratives is that they “speak to the heart” of readers. In his study of earlier colonial Irish lives in the South Island, in *To Tara via Holyhead*, Lyndon Fraser suggests “a careful balance between micro-ethnography and the macro-empirical will lead to more adequate socio-historical explanations of colonial life” (1997, p. 163). Reflecting on that I realised I have been an accidental ethnographer of many different communities: geographic, cultural, sporting, and spiritual (see Artefact, Final Chapter).

In her research in *Irishtown Hamilton East 1864-1940* Cathy O’Shea-Miles acknowledges that her study would have been impossible without the use of oral histories. She references an earlier call by historian Akenson for research at a “micro level” before meaningful generalisations can be made. She acknowledges there are likely other communities in New Zealand where the techniques of oral history could offer new perspectives. These record how people live their everyday lives, or what she calls the very essence of a community. The challenge she identifies is to record these histories “before the generation disappears forever” (O’Shea-Miles, 2002, p. 149). I have been aware throughout the process of this inquiry that these interviews record lives that are passing quickly, and that it is an important task for me to record those that I can, as I care for our histories and herstories of Irish and Scottish people here in Aotearoa.

Akenson has called a multi-generational perspective more challenging than focusing on simple “emigrant” history, but that “it has the potential to be infinitely more productive” (as cited in Fraser, 2000, p. 18). I certainly believe this approach has rich detail and insight to offer more traditional historical frames. In most cases *Southern Celts* narratives provide a multi-generational story encompassing generations past, and those present (see interviews of Denis O’Connor, Ann Corry, Evey McAuliffe, and Fraser Milne). Narrative inquiry’s three frames of analysis: time part, present and future; place; and the intersection between society and the individual, assist with understanding the rich insights of this multi-generational perspective. This is explored more in later chapters.

### Approaching the same territory, using different approaches

*Southern Celts* probably best contributes to a genre where narratives tell more focused personal stories like Sister Pauline O'Reagan's *A Changing Order* (1986) and *Aunts and Windmills* (1991) or Karen Hansen's oral histories *New Zealand Irish Voices: Stories from Irish Migrants and their Descendants* (2008). However my more analytical and critical approach, asking questions about cultural identity and colonisation, also enables the artefact to contribute to research done through more traditional historical analysis.

### Irishness and Scottishness in New Zealand

*Southern Celts* narratives cover many of the same issues as New Zealand scholar Angela McCarthy's more traditional and complex historiographical texts about the Scottish and the Irish in New Zealand. Among these are *Personal Narratives of Irish and Scottish Migration 1921-1965* (2007) which uses longer excerpts of individual narratives from letters, and *Scottishness and Irishness in New Zealand since 1840* (2011) which uses "insider and outsider" perceptions of characteristics of Irish and Scottish identities in New Zealand (McCarthy, 2011, p. 6). In contrast, interview narratives in *Southern Celts* are narratives which consider "insider" perceptions only.

In the latter text McCarthy explores ethnic identity, addressing issues related to historical analysis including "the standard trope of New Zealand society" which emphasises its British and Pakeha character through "overarching categorisations that subsume divergent and individual and collective ethnic affiliation" (2011, p. 4). This understanding references my own observation of the accepted "Britishness" of New Zealand, a perspective that never sat comfortably with my own experience (see Artefact, Introduction). Part of that was a realisation that "Britishness" is, from my point of view, a construct built on centuries of colonisation, clear to me from understanding Irish history, and her assertion of her sovereignty, initially through physical force fighting for independence from the English state, then through a civil war (Markievicz, 1987). Assertion of independence is currently playing itself out in Scotland, as illustrated in a newspaper article in *The Scotsman* (Maddox, 2015) which records that plans by some groups for a second referendum on independence are strongly opposed by other groups.



I am also aware that many people, in New Zealand value and hold affection for “Britain.”

Though this inquiry is informed by an analysis of the discursive construction of cultural identity, rather than ethnic identity, our underpinning analyses share similarities.

McCarthy acknowledges that ethnic identity is “but one of many identities that individuals and groups can hold” (2011, p. 5) as I do in my inquiry. She acknowledges that “identities have multiple and fluid meanings...” which are “shaped and determined by the wider environment” (2011, p. 5), which *Southern Celts* narratives illustrate. Our methods differ in that she draws on a range of sources, of letters, diaries, shipboard records, and other more modern artefacts like movies, whereas *Southern Celts* offers personal oral narratives, all “insider” perspectives. *Southern Celts* offers a more sustained focus on the issues of relationships amongst Maori, Scottish and Irish, as it is a focus in each interview, while McCarthy makes broader comparisons with diaspora communities. McCarthy concludes that more engagement with multi-generational descent groups is required (2011, p. 211) and my interview narratives provide this in vivid detail.

### ***What of the reader?***

I hope *Southern Celts* finds its way to readers who care about these issues of cultural identity, and that the writing is strong enough to keep them interested and engaged. I agree with Clandinin and Connelly that the narrative inquirer does not prescribe general applications and uses, but rather creates texts which, when well-done, offer readers a place to imagine their own uses and applications (2000, p. 42). From an educational context, Benson (2013) argues that presenting longer narratives allows readers to make their own interpretations. I imagine that a busy reader might pick up the *Southern Celts* book, take the time to read one interview, perhaps recognise the experience as partially their own, reflect on it and put it down, but continue that reflection at times through the rush of a working day, and then come back some time later to read another interview.

In this first chapter I have introduced the inquiry, personal and professional reasons for choosing the Gael – the Irish and the Scots – as my focus, and reviewed already published work across a range of genres which *Southern Celts* is both informed by and

will contribute to: mainstream historiography, fiction, personal narratives and poetry. I have also introduced the practice-led methodology, focusing on my choice of narrative as method and text, writing as method, supporting literatures for my use autoethnography and ethnographic insights, as well as the construction of culture and identity which are key concepts that this inquiry both explores and illustrate. I suggest what kind of contribution my inquiry and artefact might make.

In the next chapter I will discuss choices made about interviewees, the interviewing process, transcription of interview texts and return of these to interviewees for comment and changes.

## **Chapter Two: Living the Narrative**

In autoethnographic methods the researcher is the epistemological and ontological nexus of the research process (Spry, 2001, p.711).

The interview process is not “a neutral tool of data gathering, but rather an active interaction between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually-based results (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 698).

This chapter builds on the previous chapter which introduced the narrative inquiry influences that have shaped it, and academic and mainstream texts which have influenced it. It explores the collection of a series of pilot interviews, developing interview questions, choosing interviewees and collecting 40 interviews. It explores how interviewees responded to the same set of questions in different ways. It analyses the process of transcription and returning the text to the interviewee for further comment. It examines the need for explicitly ethical behaviour in the inquiry process and my experience of a Maori approach to interviewing as a research method. It looks at techniques used to cultivate consciousness and reflexivity and positions this autoethnographic inquiry as being underpinned by a critical feminist viewpoint.

### ***Exploring the method***

## Pilot interviews

Before beginning *Southern Celts* research in late 2009, I had done five interviews, between 1994 and 2000, which explored expressions of Irish and Scottish cultures: a master carver of Scottish background, a fashion designer and owner of Irish-inspired fashion design label *Roisin Dubh*, a kilt maker and owner of a kilt making business, the proprietor of the Dunedin Scottish Shop, and a teacher of Irish Gaelic. They were not done as part of the ethical framework of this PhD inquiry, a frame work informed by Tolich's (2010) analysis of ethical issues, which are explored later in this chapter. Drawing on experience as a journalist and my own personal interests I used questions designed to elicit chronological details of the person's life, their life choices, and their reflections on New Zealand society in relation to the Irish and the Scots. Three of those interviewees: the master carver, the kilt maker and the proprietor of the Dunedin Scottish Shop, were re-interviewed between five and eighteen years later, this time with their formal approval to be part of this PhD inquiry. Documentation was signed or unsigned by choice, as per ethics approval requirements which are discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

Pinnegar and Danes (2007) write that both researcher/ inquirer and "the researched" will change in the process of narrative inquiry. This was exemplified for me when the teacher of Irish Gaelic did not give his permission for his earlier interview to be used as part of the inquiry artefact. His experience as a native Irish speaker and teacher of Irish in New Zealand would have been a valuable addition to the artefact. I was disappointed not to have a teacher of Irish Gaelic to accompany the two Scots Gaelic teachers (see Evelyn Entwistle and Michael Godfrey), but I respected his decision, as is required by ethical practice. Atkinson (2002, p. 13) says "The person telling the story should always have the last word in how his or her story is presented in written form, before it gets passed onto others or is published." A corollary to this is that it is an interviewee's choice to decide against his story being used at all. Another of the pilot interviews was not used as the fashion designer stopped trading, for reasons I've never found out.

## Interview questions

I have been influenced in the construction of interview questions by critical researcher and educationalist Bonnie Norton's belief that theory implicitly or explicitly informs the

researcher's questions (Norton Peirce 1995, p. 569; Norton 2000). By the time I came to rework the questions used for pilot interviews I had completed Masters research which explored Norton's postmodern, poststructuralist understanding of the complexity of social identity and language acquisition (Kearney, 2003). As a consequence I kept questions as open as possible so that individuals could speak from their own experience, guided by my interview questions.

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three frames of narrative inquiry were another influence upon the new set of questions. For example, question number eight "Has your understanding of / attitude to this cultural connection changed over time?" was influenced by their second frame, *time*. Whereas in the pilot interviews I had focused on *past* time, in this inquiry working with Clandinin and Connelly's frame of time which relates to the past, present and *future*, I gained a new awareness of the importance of the passage of time and the need to look also to the future. This understanding of time and the growing sense of its centrality to the whole *Southern Celts* project also influenced my use of the visual metaphor of time in the interweaving and spirals used in traditional Celtic art, in the artefact's introduction. In a later chapter I explore Misher's concept of the "double arrow of time" (2006, p.30) and discuss how it informs my understanding of Clandinin and Connelly's narrative inquiry frame of time.

Two other questions directly engage Clandinin and Connelly's third lens: the intersection between the personal and the social. Firstly, question nine: "...is there anything in the Kiwi psyche which you can link to Celtic/Gaelic cultural roots?" and "Can you identify any characteristics or behaviours in New Zealand society or in New Zealanders that might reflect the Celtic/Gaelic connection?" With postmodern understandings of plurality of identities, the idea of a unitary "Kiwi psyche" or "Kiwi society" as a single entity seemed reductionist, even as I worded the question. However the seed for inquiry into "the Kiwi psyche" had been sown years before by the owners of a South Island high country sheep station who had talked of the importance of exploring "the Kiwi psyche" in response to my idea of writing about the Irish and Scots in New Zealand, an episode which illustrates Clandinin and Connelly's understanding of narrative as a lived and told story and Gallop's anecdotal theory.

Secondly, Question Ten: “The Irish and the Scots have been systematically colonised and suffered for this. Do you think this experience and understanding has influenced how they have related to Maori, in the process of colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand?” This question about colonisation was influenced by a sense of the irony I felt about my mother’s parents leaving behind constrained circumstances in Ireland resulting from centuries of colonisation, then contributing as part of the waves of migrants to alienating land from Maori here in New Zealand. The consequences of this are eloquently illustrated in Charlie Dunn’s interview in which he describes how one iwi of Northland’s Te Rarawa tribe has struggled to regain control of tribal land from the Crown. Robert Consedine’s reflections on his Treaty of Waitangi education work and the need for Pakeha to understand their own histories of colonisation is an insightful contribution to the inquiry. Maori scholar Tuhiwai Smith’s (2012) analysis of the ongoing impact of colonisation on Maori, which is discussed later in this exegesis, has been powerfully influential in my understanding of this complex aspect of this inquiry.

Though my interview method differs from Seidman’s recommended three interviews, his question, “Whose meaning is it that an interview brings forth?” in his exploration of in-depth phenomenologically based interviewing (2006, p. 22) has been pertinent to my process in formulating questions. Roulston’s (2010) exploration of reflective interviewing also challenged me to consider what had influenced my choice of questions, and what the questions might elicit. During interviews I expressed reservations about these two questions as possibly setting up stereotypes, but despite my ambivalence, the two questions, both long in gestation, elicited rich reflections.

Below is the list of questions offered to each interviewee:

1. What is your /your family’s Celtic/Gaelic (Ireland, Scotland,) cultural background?
2. Perhaps you were not born here? If so, why and when did you come to New Zealand? How old were you? Could you tell me more about this experience?
3. If you were born in New Zealand – and even if you weren’t – how has this cultural connection been expressed in your life, for example, experiences of

grandparents or parents; food, clothes, music, stories, religion? Do you have particular stories, people, or objects that you associate with, or that embody this cultural connection?

4. Have you visited/ revisited the homeland of this cultural connection? Has this made a difference to your feelings, attitudes, personal understanding?
5. Do you speak any of the language of the country? Do you think that is important?
6. Does your choice of business, art, music, employment, hobbies (any other aspect of your life) reflect this cultural connection?
7. Has this cultural connection shown itself at particular times of your life? Have you been conscious of it as you have had important life experiences, such as celebrating achievements, having a child, burying a family member or a friend? Have you taken any particular action because of this?
8. Has your attitude to and understanding of this cultural connection changed over time? Has this been influenced by particular factors?
9. About 30% of New Zealanders claim a Scottish connection and almost 17% an Irish connection. Although societies and people change over time, is there anything in the Kiwi psyche which you can link to Celtic/Gaelic cultural roots? Can you identify any characteristics or behaviours in New Zealand society or in New Zealanders that might reflect the Celtic/Gaelic connection?
10. The Irish and the Scots have been systematically colonised and suffered for this. Do you think this experience and understanding has influenced how they have related to Maori, in the process of colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand?

### An “aide de memoire”

Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, & Alexander refer to interview questions as a guide or *aide de memoire* (1995, citing Burgess, 1982) which may be revised as interviewees provide information the interviewer had not anticipated (1995, p. 82). Experience during interviews reinforced for me the usefulness of this *aide de memoire*, assisting smoother recollection for interviewees, and a clarity of focus for me in contexts where interviewees might range widely over their life experience.

I used the questions as a frame for the interview, or an *aide de memoire*, echoing Burgess, but people responded differently to these. Some worked systematically through them, addressing each question in turn, while others told their story using different reference points: One interviewee read her poetry and her short stories, which illustrate how integral her poetry and storytelling are to her sense of identity (see Kathleen Gallagher’s interview). Reissman writes that a story is co-produced in a “complex choreography” – “in spaces between teller and listener, speaker and setting, text and reader, history and culture” (2008, p. 105), an accurate and insightful description of the processes and influences which led to telling and writing of the interview narratives and my own story.

### Choosing interviewees

My choices of interviewees were influenced by Chuang’s description of culture and cultural identity referencing nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, life-style choices, organisations, age, class, group membership, regional identity and spiritual identity (Fong & Chuang, 2004), and by Weedon (2004), whose understanding of cultural identity is quoted in Chapter One. My choices were also influenced by my own knowledge of and interests in Irish and Scottish cultures here in New Zealand, and probably most powerfully by postmodern ideas about the construction of culture and identity as complex and relational (Mishler, 2006).

Interviewees were suggested by people in personal, professional and academic networks and some were recommended by interviewees themselves. Experience has led me to concur with Roulston, who says there is neither one way nor a right way to recruit interviewees: “Researchers need to practice patience and ingenuity.....since attempts to

access communities and specific people can falter unexpectedly” (2010, p. 99). If my first contact had met an open response I would make a second contact, though some invitations “faltered” for no reason I am aware of, nor did I push individuals if they did not wish to participate.

### Gender balance in interview choices

Experience as a contributing journalist to *Broadsheet*, New Zealand’s long-running feminist magazine (Rosier, 1992), also as an activist in the international women’s peace movement (Thompson, 1983) and the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific movement (Ishtar, 1994), taught me that women, as well as men, have their stories to tell. Through experience at Greenham Women’s peace camp in England in 1984/85, I was introduced to an anthology of writings, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Colour*, which challenged white feminists to take account of the differences of experience amongst women, particularly access to material resources and power (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). I was challenged to understand that all women, not only white women, need space and opportunity to tell their stories. Ishtar’s edited collection of interviews (1998) holds one between myself and a Maori kuia (older woman), who has patiently taught me much over the years. With these feminist understandings I aimed to interview an equal number of women, so that “women as social actors in their own right can articulate the subjective meanings they assign to events and conditions in their lives” (Chase, 2005, p. 655). Having interviewed 20 women I eventually chose 11 for the artefact. McHugh (2014) argues that a feminist epistemology requires the researcher to acknowledge how life experiences might have influenced her choices, which I am doing in this exegesis, and set out to do through my autoethnographic introduction to the artefact. Weedon’s (1997) analysis of subjectivity has also informed my belief that women’s voices need to be heard.

Experience as an activist for political change in Aotearoa/New Zealand, influenced by Maori activists including Donna Awatere’s *Broadsheet* article *Maori Sovereignty* (1984) and Professor Ranganui Walker’s analysis of Maori struggle in *Ka Whawhai Tonu Matou* (1990, 2004) meant I was aware also that experiences of Maori are absolutely essential in any collection of narratives from Aotearoa/New Zealand. I spoke with a woman of Kai Tahu and Scottish backgrounds from the South Island, whose family



home, unknown to me, is in my own hometown, and two men in the North Island, one of Te Arawa iwi and the other Te Rarawa iwi. Each narrative gives insights into individuals asserting their experiences and voices in a colonised and colonising environment (Smith, 2012).

### The importance of place

I did 40 interviews for the inquiry, over three years, spurred on always by the understanding that place has significant influence on shaping experience. Brady (2005) writes that place has crucial influence on shaping lives. “Place,” he says, is “the geography of earth, mind, body, and lived experience, the semiotically enriched site of human events and otherwise” (2005, p. 984). Land and landscape have meaning for us, he says, because of the memory attached to them and I have written my own sense of place into the artefact introduction, describing road journeys, places, and street names in Aotearoa/New Zealand. I consciously chose people from all around the country, because I have family in both the North and South Islands, of Irish farming backgrounds, and know how different their lives were.

For this inquiry I have visited places associated with the Irish and Scottish in terms of memories, my own and national historical memory, built around communities. In the South Island, I drove the roads of my childhood to visit Dunedin, the Gaelic for Edinburgh, where significant Scottish settlement began in the 1840s and which still today promotes its Scottish ancestry (Enterprise Dunedin, 2015). There I interviewed three people of Scottish and Irish backgrounds, all included in the artefact. I also drove through the Southern Alps, the mountain range that runs the centre of the South Island, to the west coast, historically associated with Irish Catholic settlement (Campbell, 2004, p. 12). Though I did interview a man of Irish Catholic background, there I chose an interview with a Scottish-born woman for the artefact. There is more discussion of decisions about choosing 25 of the 40 interview narratives for the artefact in the next chapter. I interviewed two women of Scottish and Irish backgrounds in the Bay of Plenty on the upper North Island’s east coast. I chose one for the artefact who had grown up in Kati Kati, an area settled by people from Ulster from the mid 1870s (Gray, 2000).

In the early years of colonisation the upper half of the North Island was called New Ulster, named for Ulster, the northern province of Ireland where my father's mother and grandfather came from. The name, New Ulster, was in response to anti-Catholic beliefs, which made the Irish province of Ulster "a most suitable site for any recruitment" for settlement in the new colony of New Zealand (Campbell, 2004, p. 15).

While I have argued in Chapter One that this inquiry is an exploration of the discursive construction of culture I came to understand that relationship to the land is a crucial part of my research. Brady's belief, stated earlier, that the land as "place" is "the geography of earth, mind, body, and lived experience" (2005, p. 984) dovetails also with Clandinin and Connelly's understanding of narrative as "lived experience," remembering also that place is one of their three frames of narrative inquiry. Indigenous Hawaiian scholar, Aluli-Meyer writes "land is more than just a physical locale; it is a mental one that becomes water on the rock of our being" (2008, p. 219), an idea that has accompanied me since the start of the inquiry and that I revisit in Chapter Five.

### The unexpected

I am grateful to a fellow student in a Melbourne seminar, where I first presented my plan for this inquiry, who spoke about the tradition of the warrior, familiar to me from Irish myth and history (Delaney, 1989), and the Scottish tradition of loyalty to the clan leader (Offwood, 2003). Echoing Jane Gallop's anecdotal theory (2002), this incident led me to look past dance as the only expression of physical culture which I had planned to include, to sport.

### "Partial, local and historical knowledge"

Keenly aware that I needed a broad representation of people as interviewees, but unsure whether I have achieved that, I am however able to be satisfied with the generous sharing of life experiences of these 40 people, believing as Richardson & St. Pierre do that a postmodern position allows us to know "something" without claiming to know everything and to write "as situated writers telling about the world as we perceive it" (2005, p. 928). I feel that my story and those of the interviewees are sufficient to address the research topic, given "Having a partial, local and historical knowledge, is still knowing" (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 961).

## My role as an interviewer

Unlike Van Manen (1990) – whose early work I found little common understanding with because of his insistence on finding the “essence” of experience – I could never “bracket” my experience as a New Zealand woman of Irish cultural background, and engage in the interview taking a neutral stance, conducting a phenomenologically informed interview in which I collect detailed description of the interviewees experience, refraining from evaluating or challenging a participants response (as cited in Roulston, 2010, p. 17). I engaged in this research as the person I am: there to learn from the interviewee, but also to give my opinion in response when I felt strongly enough. I have left these exchanges in a few of the interviews in the artefact for examination, retained for transparency, enabling the reader to see how my response directed the flow of the interview. I agree with Gubrium and Holstein (2002) that it is not enough just to present information from the interview, because gathering this has depended on negotiation and interactions between the researcher and respondent and these need to be made clear. Final editing of the artefact before publishing may take out these personal exchanges to facilitate an easy flow in the narrative.

Nor could I be guided by Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell and Alexander’s recommendation about listening skills in in-depth interviewing (1995, p. 103) to “resist being overly influenced by emotion-laden words or arguments.” In two interviews with the Presbyterian minister I had unbidden tears rolling down my checks, triggered on reflection that this gentle man spoke about a spirituality connected to the natural world, a celebration of life. This was a spirituality I could have lived with, within an institutional church context, which may not have caused me the grief of leaving a church institution I had loved (Kearney, 1997). At the beginning of our second interview, he ritualised the situation by lighting a candle, echoing for me Aluli-Meyer’s reflection that intentionality of process, and the practice of mindfulness are spiritual principles that can be played out as epistemology and understood as the spirituality of knowledge (2008, p. 218). While Aluli-Meyer’s experience is informed by her and her Hawaiian interviewees’ traditional indigenous understandings of spirituality, the Presbyterian minister’s actions were presumably prompted by his Christian religious training; however in the practice of the interview, and the praxis of this inquiry, I drew strength from his action, as I do from Aluli-Meyer’s understandings of spirituality of

knowledge. I return to a consideration of epistemology of spirit in Chapter Five. Chase (2011, p. 424) notes that in narrative interviewing the researcher may witness a wide range of interviewees' emotions and needs to be prepared for this. From my experience I would add that the researcher needs to be able to process a range of her or his own emotions as discretely as possible so as not to influence the process of the interview too markedly.

I do resonate with Catherine Reissman's nuanced explanation that narrative is co-produced "in spaces between teller and listener, speaker and setting, text and reader, history and culture" (2008, p. 105). This exegesis teases out some of these multi-layered interactions in the production and representation of these *Southern Celts* narratives.

### ***Ethical issues***

Using an autoethnographic stance has attracted criticism from within the academy, an issue I have already addressed in Chapter One. Tolich (2010) reviews what he considers to be irresponsible practices by well-known qualitative researchers whom he considers have been deliberately remiss in not following required ethical practices when using autoethnographic methods. He believes "autoethnography, as any social science research method, has situated ethics, determined by its position within risk adverse institutions (IRBs) prescribing its members to use informed consent" (2010, p. 1606). He notes that in "the context of Creative Analytical Practices, people are routinely researched without consent" (2010, p. 1608). I employ CAP practices in this inquiry, discussed later in Chapter Four, but in contrast with his findings I have worked hard to engage ethically with interviewees, aware of issues he focuses on: consent, consultation and vulnerability of interviewees and their families, as well as of myself and my extended family.

Aware of the importance of an ethical approach to collecting interviews as, Roulston clearly states, "to conduct qualitative interview research researchers must fulfil the requirements mandated by the institution in which they work, as well as those required in the settings where they seek to conduct research" (2010, p. 97), I gave, sent or emailed each person written information explaining the project with a permission sheet (Appendix 1). Many people gave written permission, while others proceeded without

feeling the need to sign the permission sheet. One interviewee said she found my information sheet was contradictory, because although I had assured her all interview tapes would be kept locked away, so privacy would be assured, the permission sheet specified that I intended to publish named interviews in a book. Although I had driven several hundred miles to interview her, I immediately offered to discontinue the interview if she chose. She continued, for no particular stated reason. I sent the text back to her asking whether I might use the story and if so, for her to make any changes or additions she felt were needed to accurately represent her experience, as Chase (2011, p. 242) and Reissman (2008, p. 198) recommend. She wrote a hurried response, as she was preparing to fly to Ireland to visit family, making changes and additions to the written transcript. I've taken this also as her assent to be included in the book of interviews. The significant difference for the narrators in the *Southern Celts* artefact is that their identity is not disguised as are participants in most qualitative research. In many cases interviewees are well known in different areas society in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond.

#### Manaaki ki te tangata

Roulston, as quoted earlier, specifies that researchers must respond to the requirements of the institution and “the setting where they seek to conduct research.” My experience with two interviewees required a closer response than others. Two Maori interviewees invited me to stay overnight and offered me generous hospitality. Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes this as *manaaki ki te tangata*, meaning “sharing, hosting, being generous”: a Maori philosophical value that underpins a collaborative approach to research in which the researcher is acknowledged as “a learner,” a participant, not just an observer or a gather of data. In this process knowledge flows both ways (Smith, 2005, p. 98). Responding to that highly valued personal relationship, I plan to return both final texts, in paper copy, either personally, or through my sister in my hometown.

This experience of hospitality and the understanding of the importance of building relationships is an integral aspect of an important larger questions being explored in this inquiry, that of colonisation, and its consequences. In her exploration of decolonising methodologies, Smith writes of “the intellectual project of decolonising”: “It needs a radical compassion that reaches out, that seeks collaboration, and that is

open to possibilities that can only be imagined as other things fall into place” (2012, p. xii). I hope the processes I have followed in this inquiry have the integrity of those decolonising methodologies, and I value the opportunity to collaborate with the aim that individuals’ voices and stories be heard by a wide audience. Voices of indigenous scholars in the academy, such as Smith (2005, 2012), and Bishop (2008) are being heard more often and more easily now than in earlier decades.

### ***Working with the narratives***

#### **Cultivating conscious reflexive awareness**

Since my background as a Southern Celt shapes my engagement as researcher, and writer, there is no pretence of being an objective inquirer. Acknowledging this breaks down the subject/object, self/society split of more traditional qualitative research and writing (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Reed-Danahay, 1997). As a consequence I have needed to cultivate a conscious reflexive awareness of every aspect of the work of collecting and re-presenting the narratives. Using a reflective journal has been crucial in cultivating the “wakefulness” Clandinin and Connelly recommend for living out the narrative inquiry (2000, p. 185). Aluli-Meyer also writes that a researcher needs to develop mindfulness of every aspect of the process (2008). In this practice-led research journaling has allowed me to record insights and questions, also to engage “an internal dialogue” encompassing physical, mental and emotional responses (Tenni, Smythe & Bochner, as cited in Leavy, 2009).

Butler-Kisber’s (2010, p. 18) exploration of the use of identity memos (citing Maxwell, 1996) also kept me conscious of my decisions and my responses. These short concise statements address the questions: Who am I; What beliefs do I have that might impact on my work?; How will I account for my beliefs and assumptions during my study? The answers make tacit assumptions explicit, so helping me monitor my choices and processes. This was particularly pertinent in my interview with the genealogist from an historical Ulster settlement, explored later in this chapter.

#### **Keeping a reflective journal**

Writing a reflective journal has also assisted me to develop the autoethnographic insights running through the artefact (Chang, 2008; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Muncey,

2010). The opportunity to revisit and reread my diaried descriptions of and responses to interviews, which I had forgotten in the rush of life, enabled me to maintain a sense of the significance of my own experience.

An example of this process was my visit to the east coast of the North Island to interview the genealogist, who has been awarded a Queens Service Medal (QSM) for her services to genealogy, and who has spent nearly four decades collecting stories of the original and early settlers of the Ulster settlement of Kati Kati. She was warm and welcoming and eager to share the work done by herself and others. She generously gave me a history of Kati Kati, written by a former teacher in the area, Arthur Gray, first published in 1938, reprinted 1950, a centennial edition in 1975 and again in 2000. Having grown up in a green Irish tradition in New Zealand, with Catholic families from Ulster: my father's mother born in County Antrim and father's grandfather born in County Derry, I was given pause for thought at the following paragraph:

A colonising tradition was in the blood of these people. The home of Ulster was only theirs by adoption. In the days of James the First, the North of Ireland, after seven years of fierce civil war was cleared of its native inhabitants and planted with settlers of Scottish and English origin. This was the celebrated Plantation of Ulster; and it was from these people and those who followed them across the water in succeeding generations that most of the Kati Kati settlers were descended (Gray, 2000, p. 2).

Shocked at first, knowing the implications of that triumphalist point of view and the profound effect it has had for my own family, using the strategy of "identity memos" already discussed, I am able to stand at a remove from my own anger and present my interviewee's narrative, in an attempt for a variety of voices and stories to be heard. I'm aware that the passage of time is bringing change in Ireland and to anti-Catholic feelings in New Zealand and this inquiry has assisted those understandings. Reissman articulates this powerfully, "The truths of narrative accounts lie not in their faithful representation of a past world but in the shifting connections they forge among past, present and future" (2002, p. 705). I see this narrative inquiry as a part of recording those shifting connections.

### Transcribing, interpreting and editing interview texts

This process is long and complex, and has generated much academic discussion. With interview texts ranging from 3,000 to 7,000 words, some quite digressive, I needed to edit to what I felt was essential to answering the interview questions. Reissman (2002) and Davidson (2009) believe transcriptions are theory laden. “How we choose to represent spoken dialogue is not independent of theoretical goals” (Reissman, 2002, p. 707). I felt my task was to retain the integrity of information contained in the interviews, and where possible the sound of the voices of the interviewees. In several instances I retained dialect influences in choice of word or pronunciation, rather than homogenising the language (see Fraser Milne & Laura Mills). Atkinson asks “Do their [interviewee’s] words, tone, mood or style tell us anything about them?” (2002, p. 133). I believe they support individual linguistic identities and help create texts that are interesting and alive for the reader.

For some interviewees I returned to do a second interview, having transcribed the first and returned it with questions for further detail. Other times the text was emailed or sent back in hard copy for changes and additions. Interviewees had different responses to the texts: Several of the writers did a very thorough editing job, adding more information where I noted more was needed. One interviewee was shocked at the text, which in the early stages was largely a transcript of her spoken language, unedited at that point, as I was wanting to get her approval for the content. That feeling of embarrassment or shock in response to seeing an interview transcript was noted in Mero-Jaffe’s article about interview transcript approval. This particular interviewee then edited her own interview as did some of Mero-Jaffe’s participants, changing “spoken language to written discourse or at least to a more refined discourse” (2011, p. 240), while essentially leaving content unchanged.

This chapter has explored the processes of doing a series of pilot interviews, developing interview questions, choosing interviewees and collecting 40 interviews. It has analysed issues around the process of transcription and returning texts to interviewees for further comment, and related ethical issues. It has reflected on processes of cultivating consciousness and reflexivity. It has also considered some important theoretical issues,



including working with Maori philosophical values, and positioned this autoethnographic narrative as being underpinned by a critical feminist viewpoint.

The next chapter will discuss the further shaping of interviewee narratives and in some cases the use of art-based practices. It looks at decisions made about the structuring of the artefact and it considers issues of voice, both mine and the interviewee narrators.

## Chapter Three: Representing the Interviews

The previous chapter has analysed collecting interviews and issues around transcribing, editing and returning interview texts for feedback, and also discussed issues related to these processes, including ethical behaviour and reflexivity. It explains a critical feminist viewpoint which informs the inquiry.

This chapter discusses choosing 22 out of 40 interviews, grouping them in sections, and making decisions about shaping the interview texts, including how to begin and what to leave out. It also discusses understandings of voice, both mine as the narrative inquirer and of the interviewees. It analyses the overall structure of the artefact, in which key questions and themes discussed in the introduction are explored implicitly and explicitly through interviews and revisited in the final chapter. There is discussion of arts-based practices: using poetry and visual elements, chosen to contribute to the narrative, and a coda which revisits the metaphor of the narratives interweaving through time and space, like the spiral patterns of Celtic art and a motif of music as a celebration of the energy of the lives of the interviewees and their families.

### *Choosing interviews and placement in artefact*

#### *A crystal not a triangle*

As a qualitative researcher and an applied linguist I had previously “triangulated” participant information, gathering data from different sources to “validate” findings. But sociologist Laurel Richardson (2000) offered me a way to use what I most value, stories of individuals, by suggesting that instead of the metaphor of the “triangle,” in postmodern mixed-genre texts, writers could use the metaphor of the “crystal.” Significantly, a crystal is multidimensional and “what we see depends on our angle of repose” (2000, p. 963), thus supporting the concept of the discursive construction of identity and culture, which *Southern Celts* the artefact and this exegesis both explore and illustrate. Using this metaphor each of the interviewees’ stories is a refraction of the crystal, as is my own. Richardson’s question “How do we nurture our own individuality and at the same time lay claim to knowing something?” (2000, p. 925) has assisted me to reflect on my understanding of methodology and methods which allow me to offer

interview narratives as a way to answer the questions set out in the artefact introduction, and which this inquiry explores.

### Deciding on placement

I chose 22 full interviews, and influenced by Weedon's (2004) definition of culture referenced in Chapter One I placed them in sections titled: business, language, music, writing, visual arts, spirituality and religion, sport, museum sector/education. Over time I realised that my experience need not be confined to the introduction. So in the spirit of analytical autoethnographer Chang (2008), I have drawn on my own experience also in the short introductions to several interview narratives and in the final chapter.

Initially there was a separate section for Maori interviewees, to acknowledge their status as *tangata whenua*, people of the land. I had also included Pakeha of Irish background Robert Consedine in this because of his decades-long commitment to education about the Treaty of Waitangi. However over time I realised that while I had deliberately chosen several people because of the Maori strand of their multiple cultural identities, it was not this aspect that was key to this inquiry, it was instead their Scottish and or Irish cultural ancestry, and how this was expressed in their lives. Consequently I repositioned them in sections which related to that salient aspect of their multiple identities.

My ambivalence about institutional religion meant the Religion/Spirituality section took time to develop. I had initially decided to avoid it, naming the section Spirituality, with one full interview from a Presbyterian minister who has based his Presbyterian ministry around teaching Celtic Spirituality. I reasoned that other interviewees and my own introduction had already addressed issues of religion so these were already a part of the inquiry. But given I had travelled hundreds of miles to areas of New Zealand with well-documented connections to the Orange (Protestant) and the Green (Roman Catholic) traditions to talk with people whose lives have been influenced by these, I felt it was important they were represented in a complete interview. My final decision was to have a section entitled Religion and Spirituality and include an interview with an Irish-born woman, now Head of Religious Studies in a Catholic primary school in the South Island. I also added a shorter interview, to the final section, with the woman who was awarded a Queens Service Medal for her services to genealogy, discussed in Chapter

Two, which offers a perspective from an “orange” background. Her work researching stories of that settlement has more recently been published as a co-authored book *The Pioneers, Settlers and Families of Katikati and District* (Clement & McCormack, 2012), which contains over 125 family histories from 1870-1910.

### ***Re-constructing the narratives***

Narrative theorist Polkinghorne’s (1995) use of Dollard’s (1935) seven criteria for judging a life history were useful for me in analysing how I might shape the interviews. Dollard’s seventh criteria in particular focuses on the story as “a reconstruction of a series of events and actions that produced a particular outcome.” He then poses the question, “How is it this outcome came about, what events and actions contributed?” (as cited in Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 18). “The outcome” represented in *Southern Celts* is the involvement with and reflections each interviewee has made about Scottish or Irish cultures in New Zealand. My task was to create a lively and informative writing style, and to answer Dollard’s question while retaining the individual voices of narrators, a process discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

### **Where or how to begin each interview?**

Guidance for beginning each interview came from a *New Zealand Listener* book review of a new biography of English writer Jane Austen. The biographer “spins” each chapter off a “small thing” – a water colour of Lyme Regis, a royalty cheque, a box of letters, rather than “the usual chronological route” (Tolerton, 2013, p. 34). Adopting this strategy freed me from a repetitive chronological method that bored me: one I felt certain would not produce the lively text I was aiming for. In most cases each interviewee is introduced through an artefact, or an aspect of the interviewee’s life including: a gateway in a paddock (Sean Brosnahan); a set of sterling silver pipes (Bain McGregor); collections of poetry (Bernadette Hall); the cover photograph of a book accompanying an art exhibition (Dennis O’Connor); a song (Michael O’Leary); a facebook picture (Marianne Hepple); a prayer (John Hunt) and a picture on a living room wall (Laura Mills). Each “small thing” adds a visual element to the narrative which invites the reader into the text, an aspect of Butler-Kisber’s (2010) arts-informed perspectives that I discuss in more detail later in the chapter.

## What to leave out?

In this editing process, Polkinghorne's question "what do you leave out that is not pertinent to the development of the storied narrative?" was one I came back to again and again (1995, p. 16). Guided by my interview questions I wanted narratives that answered those questions in rich detail without analytical comment from me. The text of the artefact, submitted for examination, has also had an edit by two editors with an Irish backgrounds, which has altered sentence structure not meaning.

## Shaping the narratives

Reissman describes an interview as "an interactional accomplishment" – "a joint production of the interviewer and the respondent" (2002, p. 699) and I had over time considered a range of options for shaping first person narratives which approached any explicit role of the interviewer in different ways. Sandra Koa Wing's (2008) edited diaries of people who had written their experience of the Second World War in England, through the Mass Observation Project, which offered the voices and words of "ordinary" people who lived through the war on the home front, confirmed for me the power of the individual voice. These voices, which were never oral narratives, but first person written diary texts, were organised chronologically.

In New Zealand, Gordon McLauchlan's *Loving All of It* (2010), an edited series of essays by women and men about the experience of aging, did allow for individual voices to be heard, but writing style in some places homogenised the individual voice. A reprint of Deborah Challinor's PhD work *Grey Ghosts: New Zealand's Vietnam Vets Talk About Their War* (2009), based partly upon interviews with New Zealand soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War, is a topic I am interested in, but again it did not have enough of individual voices to really stay in my mind. A more recent reading of narratives of four Maori men and one woman, *A fire in your belly: Maori leaders speak* (Diamond, 2003) confirmed for me the power of long interview narratives, uninterrupted by the interviewer's questions. The individual voice of the narrator, the phraseology and images conjured by first person narratives, remain in my mind long after the book is back on the shelf in the library.

Initially I had retained the interview questions in the *Southern Celts* narratives, a method which was adopted successfully in Deborah Shepard's *Her Life's Work: Conversations with five New Zealand Women* (2009). Later I decided that it would be too repetitive to retain questions over 22 interviews, so these were edited out to enable the interview texts to flow as coherent narratives.

In the draft of the artefact that has gone to a prospective publisher I retained in the text some of my comments in three interviews, unrelated to the list of questions, because these influenced the direction of the interview. I felt it was being transparent to the reader about how the conversation developed, illustrating Reissman's description of an interview quoted earlier (2002, 2008).

### Issues of voice

Choices I made about representing interviewees' narratives to try to retain distinctiveness of individual voices are echoed in Irish poet, and Nobel laureate, Seamus Heaney's translation of *Beowulf* referenced in Chapter One. Heaney recounted how he had found a way into translating the Anglo Saxon through recalling "an epiphany" he had experienced thirty-five years earlier. Remembering an Irish aunt's use of one word that is found in the poem, *tholian*, "to suffer" in Ulster Irish, opened a way. The voice that came to him was "a familiar local voice," "the weighty distinctiveness" of the way his father's people spoke that provided "the tuning fork" which gave "the note and pitch for the overall music of the work" (2008, p. xxi). Like Heaney, I listened for the sound and weight of individual voices, and tried to transcribe aspects of these aural features in written text. Tony O'Driscoll's life time of interview narratives with Seamus Heaney (2008) are a rich trove of Heaney's own words about his poetry and writing.

Richardson (2000, 2005) reminds us that postmodern and poststructuralist understandings of language view it as constitutive of identity, and thus as a site of exploration and struggle. (Adams St. Pierre, 2011; Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton, 2000, 2010). This accurately expresses my process of learning to write beyond more accepted journalistic and academic genres. Early on I experimented with changing an interview from the first person to the third person. Revisiting it a week later it seemed dull as it lacked the sound and energy of the person's voice and individual speaking style. So this

confirmed my instinct to keep the interview narratives in the first person, and to maintain dialect influences in choice of word or pronunciation, for example retaining Laura Mills and Fraser Milne's Scottish dialect to evoke the sound, "cannae" for "cannot" and "a greet" for cry. Fraser Milne's use of the colloquial Kiwi phrase "yeah no" illustrates that in his twenty five years in New Zealand he has absorbed the local vernacular.

Moving from the voices of my interviewees to my own voice as researcher and writer it has been an ongoing challenge to find my own voice and be comfortable with it as a writer. I wanted to hear my own voice, a lively, evocative, but informative voice, not dominating the voices of my interviewees, but able to illuminate aspects of the narratives and ongoing themes woven throughout the texts. Having spent some years in the iterative process of creating this artefact I concur with Muncey, "To present your experience in an imaginative engaging way requires you to experiment with and find your own voice" (2010, p. 82).

Richardson's understanding of the writing process as "writing as method" has assisted me to find ways into writing the artefact (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). She articulated for me that my writing style had been constrained because writing in journalistic and academic styles has traditionally allowed only a measured amount of the voice of the writer to be expressed. This helped me think around the challenge of find my own voice.

She asks: "How do we put ourselves in our own texts and with what consequences?" (Richardson, 2000, p. 925). I put myself in this artefact by telling my own story, drawing on autoethnographic methods and insights, but it is Chase's typology of three voices or strategies which contemporary narrative researchers deploy, in using their voice(s) to interpret and represent the voice of the narrator/s' (2005, p. 664), that significantly assisted me to understand how I have written myself and my own voice(s) into the artefact/book. I recognise the three of Chase's researcher's voices: *the authoritative voice*, *the supportive voice* and *the interactive voice* in different parts of the text.

The autoethnographic introduction is written in an “interactive voice” which both tells my own family story as well as setting out the questions that inform this inquiry. In the next section of the artefact where the interview narratives are represented my voice as the writer is “a supportive voice” that pushes the narrators’ voices into prominence. A muted supportive voice, it aims to create a self-reflective and respectful distance between “researcher and narrators” voices (Chase, 2005, p. 665). In the final chapter I employ the researcher’s “authorative voice”: repeating the questions laid out in the introduction and reflecting on how interview narratives relate to these questions, positioning all the narratives in Clandinin and Connelly’s three dimensional inquiry space: the past, the present and the imagined future.

### Using footnotes

Fontana and Frey (2005, p. 713) note that in understanding specific terms, it is important to create shared meaning in which both interviewer and respondent understand the contextual nature of specific referents. Given my background, I was able to understand specific references to historical events and terms related to Irish and Scottish histories used by several of my interviewees in the course of interviews. However footnotes have been suggested for the artefact for publication to inform readers who may not have the same understanding of historical events. I intend to provide a reference/ reading list for the artefact at a later stage.

### *Extending the narratives*

#### The reader or listener: Dialogic interaction

Reissman’s (2008) reflection on Bakhtin’s understanding of the dialogic construction of any utterance has illuminated for me that the interview narratives are multi-voiced, encompassing the voices of many discourses, echoing Irish American novelist Colum McCann’s introductory quote to this inquiry, that our stories are created through a multiplicity of witness (2006, p. 277). Bakhtin writes “The word is born in a dialogue, a living rejoinder within it, the word is shaped in a dialogic interaction” (1981, p.279) which is illustrated for me in the retelling of historical discourses about the colonial histories of Ireland, Scotland and Aotearoa/New Zealand in these *Southern Celts* narratives. Substantially influenced by the present, all of the narratives are rooted in the



past, as Reissman describes in “utterances that carry the traces of other utterances, past and present, as words carry history on their backs” (2008, p. 107).

How the listener or the reader receives these utterances is an essential aspect of dialogue as Bakhtin observes, “Words encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people” (1981, p. 219) thus “Discourse lives, as it were beyond itself...” (p. 292) so that “Actual social life and historical becoming create ... a multitude of concrete worlds (p. 288). These *Southern Celts* interview narratives are examples of those “concrete worlds” which provide insight into what Bakhtin perceives as “...the ever-changing world view of a living and mobile human being, one forever escaping into the infinity of real life” (1981, p. 385). This calls up Clandinin and Connelly’s understanding of narratives as ‘lived and told’ stories (2000, p. 60).

### Using metaphor

Muncey suggests metaphors serve three purposes: firstly, as distillation they condense information, as evocation, they secondly stimulate imaginative and emotive responses, while through their conceptual construction, “they alter a subject’s sensitivity that could not be conveyed by literal translation” (2010, p. 63). For me the power of the metaphor lies in the potential for imaginative and emotive response, both mine and the readers.

It took time for me to be confident enough of my own imagination and creativity to choose a metaphor for this narrative inquiry. Initially I looked to Irish myths, in Delaney’s *Legends of the Celts* (1991), hoping to find an underlying philosophical frame about life that I could use as a container for the narratives. Instead I responded to the power I have long felt in the visual image of Celtic spirals, which I understand in this context as a metaphor for the intertwining of people’s lives in time and place, in Clandinin and Connelly’s three dimensional space of this academic narrative inquiry. As I have sat with this inquiry I have often heard the light high-pitched notes of a tin whistle in my mind. So there is an aural aspect to the metaphor in which these narratives are envisaged. I have linked the image of my father and uncle and aunts dancing in the Scottish Hall in Oamaru, with the energy of music, and the beauty of the instrumental voices, in patterned repetition of notes twining and intertwining in a traditional reel which parallels the intertwining narratives (see Artefact, Introduction).

In his exploration of metaphor analysis as a method of qualitative research (2005, p. 378) Rudolf Schmidt writes that the “richer” in knowledge the researcher is “the richer” the links that she or he will be able to make between the metaphor and real life. Applying this insight to my use of metaphor, while I make some brief final analysis of the links between the metaphor and the narratives, (see Artefact, Concluding Chapter) my intention is that readers make their own links as they engage with the text. Schmidt’s conclusion that “The understanding of understanding requires a slowing down of pace...” (2005, p. 384) speaks to the need for me as the researcher and writer of this narrative inquiry to be mindful at every step of the process, as Clandinin and Connelly state, referenced earlier (2000, p. 185), not only in the implications of the choice of metaphor, but in every step of the inquiry. This exegesis argues that I have systematically tried to achieve that mindfulness and the metaphors have assisted this.

### The Artefact introduction

The introduction began as a personal, evocative piece, describing road trips around New Zealand, but over time it has systematically incorporated key questions informing the inquiry which are based first in my own experience. Drawing on Chang’s (2008) analytical autoethnography methods, as explained in Chapter One, I tell my experience, connecting it to wider social and cultural contexts here in New Zealand and beyond, combining analysis and interpretation with narrative details.

I ask the question that underlies this narrative inquiry “What is there in Aotearoa/New Zealand now of Celtic or Gaelic culture?” and I consider from my own experience how culture is expressed. I reflect that it is in people most importantly, in the use of language, architecture and lifestyle. I lay the ground for other major questions including whether the experience of colonisation experienced by Irish and Scots affected how they related to Maori in the colonisation of New Zealand.

The introduction begins with a reflection about the value of family stories, acknowledging they are always only a partial record of any person or event, but valuable because they help create our realities, as Muncey (2010, p. 102) reminds us (citing Spence, 1982) that narrative truth and historical truth are not necessarily the same. This issue of “truth” is revisited later in the exegesis. I tell immigration stories of

my grandparents and describe my road trips around New Zealand where I find aspects of Irish and Scottish cultures that I am drawn to. I also reflect on living for nine months in Ireland in 1984, according my own experience and understanding the same value as the other interviewees. In her analysis of the validity of a personal voice in academic writing, Arnold (2011, p. 54) calls such texts “academic subjective narrative” which aptly describes my use and analysis of my own experience in this exegesis.

I have included excerpts of letters by my mother’s father, Michael McDonnell, written between 1911 and 1920, to her mother, Johannah Leamy, before she left Ireland to join him. The spelling of his name changed from McDonnell to MacDonald in New Zealand (see Artefact, Introduction). His words are simple and powerful, expressing his longing and his loneliness for familiar places and people, echoing for me the power of the Old English poems referenced in Chapter One. Seamus Heaney (2008) used the memory and sound of his aunt’s voice as a way into translating Beowulf, and I hear my grandfather’s voice, in the written word, as “a tuning fork” for the power of the word written or spoken.

“Tis the only wish of my heart that some day we shall meet to part no more.... alone among strangers here I nearly go half mad” (Artefact, Introduction).

Letters, written personal narratives, are used by more traditional historians as a rich source of personal experience. McCarthy argues in a collection of articles about Irish migrants in New Zealand (2000, p. 106) that letters revealed family links played a significant role in adjustment to New Zealand society for migrant Irish women. For my grandfather too letters enabled him to communicate with Johannah and her family, easing his adjustment to life far away from home and family.

In another excerpt Michael thanks Johannah for sending a local newspaper: “*Indeed ‘tis great pleasure to me to see an Irish paper or hear any home news.*” His experience now contrasts with interviewees’ use of electronic communication; Skype and the Internet, which enable easier and closer communication with family and home country (see Laura Mills). Times have changed and use of communications technology and the relative ease of travel to and from Ireland and Scotland, illustrate historian Patrick

O'Farrell's (2000) belief that the whole concept of emigration has changed with air travel, plus greater financial prosperity. This is also acknowledged in Davies' (2000) analysis quoted in Chapter One. I also draw on newspaper and periodical articles of the time, layering and strengthening the variety of voices, illustrating Irish American novelist Colum McCann's introductory quote for Chapter One, that our voices are produced "by a multiplicity of witness."

I briefly describe my journeys around New Zealand doing interviews and suggest that these stories will have resonances for many New Zealanders given the high percentage of people with Irish and Scottish cultural backgrounds here, drawing on a variety of sources including New Zealand historians Michael King (2003) and James Belich (2001). In a later iteration I added historical information about the European Celts and the Gaels, including Oppenheimer (2006). (See Artefact, Introduction).

In a final section of the introduction I introduce the metaphor of Celtic art, linking the visual image of the interlacing spirals of Celtic art which grew out of relationship to the northern hemisphere lands to similar spiral patterns in Maori art which have been developed from Maori consciousness in this land. I draw the connection with the narratives that follow which interweave in time and place and with the energy of life illustrated visually in the Celtic spirals and expressed in Celtic music and the sound of a high energy reel celebrating life. As writer and researcher I too live in Clandinin and Connelly's three dimensional narrative inquiry space, so my story is woven into this through the image of my father and his brothers and sisters dancing at the Scottish Hall in Oamaru.

#### Extending journalistic frames: An intimate journalism

Two decades ago, as a teacher of journalism, I taught "New Journalism" in which the journalist writes as a participant, describing physical surroundings and people, providing personal responses, as well as more detached information about the event or person (Thompson, 2008; Wolfe, 1989). I integrated an element of the new journalism style into some of the interview introductions through a brief reference to some aspect of my experience of the interview. Using Jeppesen and Hansen's (2011) application of "narrative journalism" as a complementary method of inquiry, I have been able to

revisit and extend my use of journalistic writing styles. Drawing on writing as inquiry and public journalism as ethnography Jeppesen and Hansen suggest that narrative or a more intimate journalism (citing Denzin, 2000) has the potential to reveal much about individuals: positioning the author and characters in time and space creates transparency which allows the reader to review the construction of the story (2011, p.111). It is the “self-aware authorial textural posture which enables insights to be produced” (p. 111). While I have endeavoured not to be a dominant voice in the inquiry, the introduction and final chapter integrate myself as the “self-aware author” using analytical and autoethnographic method and writing.

### ***Arts-based practices***

I have been able to adopt Creative Analytical Practice (CAP) ethnography, which Richardson suggests “blurs, enlarges and alters the traditional boundaries of ethnography” (2000, p. 929). My reading of historian and sociologist Lyndon Fraser’s (1997) text based on his PhD work has enabled me to view these interview narratives as ethnographies of families and communities, rather than as stories of individuals, as referenced already in Chapter One. I concur with Leavy (2009, p. 32) that drawing on arts-based forms of narrative research enables response to long-standing objectives guiding qualitative research – getting at real, textured, complex, sensory contextual meanings, providing deeper insight into persons and places. Practitioners using arts-based practices bridge rather than divide the artist-self and researcher-self with the researcher and audience, creating knowledge “based on resonance and understanding” (Leavy, 2009, p. 2). Accessing the artist in me has been a particular pleasure, another aspect of the *bricoleur* identity I have been able to explore.

Leavy notes these arts practices are often useful in research into identity, aiming to communicate in ways that challenge stereotypes, build empathy, promote awareness and stimulate dialogue (2009, p. 13). While my personal aim has been to record individual lives and traditions here in Aotearoa/New Zealand, often with a sense of celebration that these have survived such harsh colonial histories, it has been my experience in this narrative inquiry process that my own stereotypes have been challenged, and my awareness has been broadened. This is discussed in the final chapter.

## Using poetry

Four people have included a song or poems in their interview responses. (See Laura Mills, Bernadette Hall, Michael O’Leary, and Kathleen Gallagher). Sullivan (2009, p. 111), a poet and a qualitative inquirer, writes that a poem brings an image to life and provides the reader with a sensory embodied experience (as cited in Butler-Kisber, 2010, p. 97). This is illustrated in a poem written for the birth of his New Zealand-born grandson by Laura Mill’s father in Scotland.

You name is redolent of  
That ocean-warmed western isle;  
Of heather, myrtle and whisky;  
Of people gone before;  
Of worlds old and new

As well as evoking the feel and sound of sea water, the purple of heather and smell of whisky, the final line “Of worlds old and new” encapsulates in image Clandinin and Connelly’s three dimensional narrative inquiry space, time – the past, present and imagined future – which inform my understanding of the richness of the interview narratives.

Leavy notes arts-based practices allow subjugated identities to have a voice: illustrated in Michael O’Leary’s song *Potatoes, Fish and Children* about an Irish soldier, based on a real soldier. The soldier deserted his post in the army of the Empire, unable to continue fighting to control Maori land because he recognised the similarities between Maori and his own people. The chorus describes this:

He thinks to himself by the fire at night  
I don’t know why we kill them  
O, sure they’re the same as the people at home  
Potatoes, fish and children

Other qualities of poetry that Sullivan suggests; ambiguity, open-endedness and associative logic, are embodied in Bernadette Hall's poem *Living out here on the plain*, a love poem for her husband. It is influenced by her reading of Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill, the Irish woman poet and academic who writes her poetry only in Irish (Frawley, 2005), and is informed by Bernadette's own understanding of fluidity of attitudes to language and language use. It is partially a reflection on the struggle to keep Irish Gaelic and Maori as living languages,

*Living out here on the plains*

*For John*

through thick and thin

through storm and shine

my hand on your heart, yours on mine,

we'll try to keep our weather fine

just see, the city folk will say,

how coolly they have abandoned

their language

in the face of progress

## Photographs, visuals

Bach (2007), a visual narrative inquirer, has explored the place of still photography within narrative inquiry. Working within Clandinin and Connelly's three dimensional inquiry space, Bach says photographs complement the text "adding permanence to moments" (2007 p. 289). The concept of visual narrative could be explored more thoroughly, but I feel unwilling to theorise at any length about the use of photos because I am not sure how they will be used.

I would have liked photos of the introductory "small thing" where possible to accompany the interviews, but I am content with an editorial decision made by the interested publisher to use a picture of the interviewee instead, as a marketing tool. Photographs are chosen by the interviewee.

## Final chapter: Reflections and coda

Acknowledging that readers will have their own responses to the narratives is a fundamental aspect of the narrative method as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) explain and it is this response I can have no control over. Having left the reader to read each of the 22 interviews, I then make my own reflections on the questions I pose in the artefact introduction, with reference to some interviewees' experiences. Readers may find other aspects of the interviewee's experience to be equally as relevant, or even more so. In Bakhtin's philosophy "the brute heteroglossia of the real world" (1981, p. 385) leaves these narratives open to readers' multiple interpretations and understandings which may differ vastly from mine.

I finish with the visual and aural metaphors, influenced in this choice by New Zealander and Professor of Writing at the University of Dundee, Kirsty Gunn's powerful fiction *The Big Music* (2012) written for her Scottish father, which begins and ends with the image and the sound of a piper on a distant landscape.

It is my intent to try to reach as wide an audience as possible with these narratives. I am hopeful that by using arts-based strategies as Leavy notes "free from discipline specific jargon and other prohibitive, even elitist barriers" these representations "can be shared with wide and diverse audiences": this may expand the effect of scholarly research which is most often restricted to the academy, arguably "doing little to serve the public



good” (2009, p. 14). As well as wishing to serve the public good I also wish to celebrate these cultural expressions in New Zealand.

In this chapter I have continued to analyse the construction of the artefact and reconstruction of the interview narratives. I have explored issues of voice and the use of Creative Analytical Practices including poems and song, and other text types, which I see as illustrating Column McCann’s statement that our individual voices are created through a “multiplicity of witness.” In the next chapter I will try to assess the artefact by employing Laurel Richardson’s four criteria for judging quality of Creative Analytical Practice (CAP) ethnography: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity and impact (2005, p. 962).

## Chapter Four: Assessing the Artefact

Memory is not a spontaneous word association, as speakers and researchers build memory from a shared perspective of the present... The challenge to us as researchers is to ensure that individuals are not the object of our discourses, but rather the agents of complex, partial and contradictory identities that help transform the worlds that they and we inhabit (Tierney, 2000, p. 545).

How do authors position themselves as knowers and tellers? These issues engage the intertwined problems of subjectivity, authority, authorship, reflexivity and process, on the one hand, and of representational form on the other (Richardson, 2000, p. 936; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 962).

In the previous chapter I have analysed choices made about presenting the narratives, exploring the issue of voice and the use of arts-based practices. This chapter will attempt to assess what the artefact might offer readers, using four criteria that researcher and writer Laurel Richardson proposed for judging the quality of Creative Analytic Practice (CAP) ethnography (Richardson, 2000, p. 936, Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 964). I will address each of the four criteria: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity and impact. Under the criterion of substantive contribution I explore interviewee's responses to three key questions. Firstly, what is there in Aotearoa New Zealand now that is influenced by Irish and Scottish cultural influences? Secondly, what is there in the Kiwi psyche that is influenced by the Scots and Irish who have settled here? Thirdly, have Irish and Scottish experiences of colonisation affected how people from these backgrounds have related to Maori in the colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand?

### ***Criteria one: Substantive contribution***

The first of Richardson's criteria is substantive contribution. One question she asks to elucidate this criteria is: Does the piece contribute to our understanding of social life? (Richardson, 2000, p. 936; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 964). In this context I

would define “contribution to understanding of social life” to mean narrators’ answers to the questions posed in the artefact introduction: Firstly, what is there in New Zealand now, and in the “Kiwi psyche” that is influenced by people of Scottish and the Irish background? Secondly, do you think that the Irish and Scottish experience of colonisation has influenced how they have related to Maori, in the process of colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand?

Reflecting on the question of substantive contribution I am heartened to recall Richardson’s statement, that working from a postmodern position allows us to know “something” without claiming to know everything. I acknowledge therefore that these narratives are “partial, local and historical” with the narrators, myself included, situated speakers or “subjectivities engaged in knowing/telling about the world as they perceive it” (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 961). Before I consider how substantive these narratives might be I will revisit two issues already identified in this exegesis and which have significant bearing on how substantive the narratives might be perceived to be by readers, both academic and general.

### Truth and memory

The two issues are perceptions of truth and memory. In the artefact introduction I address how difficult it is to apply the notion of “truth” to family stories and personal narratives, because these are often partial records of events or people, and in Chapter Three of this exegesis I have supported this with autoethnographer Muncey’s 2010 acknowledgement that shared family memories do not necessarily contain verifiable truth, as does her reminder of Spence’s distinction between “narrative truth and historical truth” (as cited in Muncey, 2010, p. 102). Bochner (2012, p. 161) describes the kinds of truth that stories of family record or individual memories construct as “emotional, dialogic and collaborative.”

The second issue is memory which is fundamental to narrators’ abilities to respond to the inquiry questions. In the quote which introduces this chapter Tierney reminds us that in these research narratives memory is built from a shared perspective of the present (2000, p. 545). I will explore broader issues of cultural memory later in this chapter. But I will discuss now insights into the influence of memory in the *Southern Celts*

narratives that I have gained through narrative philosopher Ricoeur's elucidation of "narrative time." He understood narrative activity as "the privileged discursive expression of pre-occupation and its making present" (1980, p.176). His concept of time or "temporality" involves "the deep *unity* of future, past and present – or rather of coming forth, having been and making present" (p.176), echoing one of Clandinin and Connelly's three frames of narrative inquiry, that of time perceived as past, present and future. He posits (1980, p. 180/181) that narratives are necessarily constructed not only *within time*, but also *within memory*, thus narratives combine chronological and non-chronological dimensions. He understood memory not as a "narrative of external adventures, stretching along episodic time" but as "the spiral movement, that through anecdotes and episodes brings us back to the almost motionless constellation of potentialities that narrative retrieves" (p 186). That "spiral movement" recalls the metaphor of the spiral image in which these *Southern Celts* narratives are placed in the artefact, in a metaphor of life envisaged in the spirals of Celtic art where all physical reality is connected in and out of time.

#### "The double arrow of time" and "restorying"

Influenced by Ricoeur, narrative theorist Mishler called the combination of chronological and non-chronological dimensions of time "the double arrow of time": the former relates to the physical world and the latter to the world of human consciousness and experience. This distinction between narrative /experiential time and chronological/clock time informs my understanding of the complexity of individual *Southern Celts* narratives and the processes each narrator has gone through in telling their responses to my questions. Mishler describes this process as "how conscious and reflective persons re-present and re-story their memories of events and experiences" (2006, p. 36). For him the double arrow is "an inherent and intractable feature of how we remember and continually restory our pasts shifting the relative significance of different events for whom we have become" (p. 36). The "restorying" of past experience in these *Southern Celts* narratives is in response to my questions about one particular part of the multiple aspects of each person's identities: their Irish or Scottish cultural roots, and how they live these out in Aotearoa/New Zealand. For myself the process of this whole inquiry is an aspect of restorying my own past and in the process opening up new ways of being for the future.

It is the dynamic aspect of memory as a medium of experience which I believe contributes to the richness of these narratives and their consequent value in understanding how Irish and Scottish cultural traditions have been and continue to be lived out here in Aotearoa. Interview narratives move backwards and forwards in time, following Mishler's "double arrow," thus providing a more satisfactorily layered flow of time reference than a purely chronological trajectory. The narratives retrieve for readers and engage them in Ricoeur's "almost motionless constellation of potentialities," as referenced above. Four examples illustrate the rich and layered flow of narrative: Firstly Denis O'Connor recalls the moment, decades earlier, when he was in the starkly beautiful landscape of Central Otago, in New Zealand, where he realised that his father had lived out of his own "internal landscape," which had been shaped in the equally starkly beautiful south west of Ireland. He describes the realisation as being like a dam bursting, and explains how it has contributed to his own ability to create works of art over his lifetime.

Secondly John Hunt recalls being a little boy, staying with his grandmother who would pray each night for protection from "the men from the north," who collapsed into John's own consciousness as Maori in the North Island struggling to protect their own land, when in fact he acknowledges the prayer probably dates to Norse and Viking raiders in the northern hemisphere, a very much earlier family experience. Patsy Montgomery remembers the hairs on her neck rising to the sound of the pipes when she was a little girl sitting on her father's shoulders at the Waipu Highland Games. She recalls that later in her life she acted, in a performing duo, as a character who wanted to work at the House of Memories, which is the older name for the Waipu Museum, but "there was nae room," yet moving to the present, she now runs the museum. She comments in her interview on the power of thought and intention as influences in her life choices. And finally, while driving me across land around the Hokianga Harbour, in Northland, Charlie Dunn describes five generations of his family who lived on the land, pointing out the place where the pa[fortified dwelling], once stood, where the wife and father-in-law of his Irish great, great grandfather would have lived, and where his great aunts and uncles lived and grew their gardens and their orchards: all gone now, but present to him in memory.

### Scottish and Irish influences in Aotearoa: interviewees' responses

Having considered issues of the nature of truth and the influence of memory in the construction of the narratives I return to my first question: What is there in New Zealand now that is influenced by Irish and Scottish cultural influences?

Historiography looks back to try to understand the influences and events that shape who we are today, whereas these narratives, record lives lived “now” – which within the frame of this inquiry is already five or six years passed. This “micro level” investigation, recalling Fraser’s (1997) suggestion drawing on oral history narratives, enables insights into individuals’ everyday lives, as researcher of a community of Irish in the regional town of Hamilton in the North Island of New Zealand, Catherine O’Shea-Miles (2004) writes. The *Southern Celts* narratives contain details of a variety of aspects of everyday life including food – which sustains physically and emotionally – clothing, sport and relationships within extended families and within communities, in both domestic and private contexts and broader public contexts, illustrating as Weedon (2004) posited that cultural identity is discursively and constantly produced and reproduced in practices of everyday life, quoted in Chapter One.

I will follow the arrangement of the narratives in the artefact. The first section contains three narratives from business owners in the South Island, of Irish and Scottish backgrounds: These add more up-to-date stories to work published by Brooking and Coleman (2003) and Patterson, Brooking and McAloon (2013) about earlier business contributions by Scots, in particular, to New Zealand. Catherine O’Shea-Miles’s warning that “the challenge is to record histories before the generation disappears forever” (2004, p. 149) rings true for me as business owner Ann Corry retired after over fifty years in the kilt making business, two years after our interview.

### Gaelic languages and influences on music and song

The second and third sections of the artefact focus on language, music and song. Here I believe several of the *Southern Celts* interview narratives make a substantial contribution to knowledge about Irish and Scottish Gaelic in the twenty first century here in Aotearoa, in the south west Pacific. Interview narratives show that Gaelic has occupied many roles as a “constitutive” factor of identity, as discussed by May (2005), a concept which will be further discussed later in the chapter.

Oona Frawley (2012), an Irish American scholar, based in Ireland, explores how cultural memory is shaped by cultural forms that “embody memory materially,” such as language, music or photography, which give rise to distinctive memory practices that embody and transmit memory in significant ways. She describes them as “smaller entrances,” “forgotten side doors” into the broader discourse of Irish cultural memory (pp. 129/130). As an applied linguist, the granddaughter of post-famine Irish Gaelic speakers, and part of a wider Irish family in Ireland, several of whom speak fluent Irish, I have never considered language to be a “forgotten side door” into culture. I am particularly aware that Irish and Scottish Gaelic, which have had harsh colonial histories, still struggle for survival in the homelands, even with significant government support (May, 2001). In Aotearoa New Zealand they are heritage languages, as they are in countries around the world like Australia, Canada and the United States where there have been large numbers of Gaelic migrants (O’Neill, 2005). Irish and Scottish Gaelic had a more public presence in our colonial past (Brooking, 2003; McCarthy, 2011), however *Southern Celts* narratives (see Evelyn Entwistle, Michael Godfrey and Sean Brosnahan) reveal both these Gaelic languages have been taught, spoken and used here at varying times and places, in public and private, over the past thirty years. This change of usage of Scottish and Irish Gaelic over time here in Aotearoa illustrates a change from instrumental uses in written text and day to day communication to use for reasons of values related to culture and identity (May, 2005, p. 339).

St John Skilton’s PhD (2004) entitled *The Survey of Scottish Gaelic in Australia and New Zealand* examines issues that relate to the revitalisation of Scottish Gaelic in Australia and elsewhere (p. 2). It also discusses the use of the term Celtic and respondents own identification as Gaels (p. 204). An academic article by Kearney and Andrew (2013) explores varying attitudes to and experiences of speaking Gaelic in Aotearoa/New Zealand, expressed in these narratives.

With a particular focus on Irish Gaelic, Katie Brown argues that as a response to famine and emigration, when the Irish language became less central to Irish culture, music “stepped into the breach to embody modes of cultural memory eclipsed by the displacement of language and its culture” (2012, p. 132). While *Southern Celts* interviews do not deal in any detail with consequences of famine as the reason for

emigration, the related “memory practices” of music and song are meaningful for a number of interviewees. For example, Irish-born Evey McAuliffe, an Irish speaker, member of the all-woman band *Cairde* for over 20 years, has taught members to sing episodes of Irish history in Irish. Secondly, New Zealand-born Sean Brosnahan taught himself the basics of Irish Gaelic, from a resource he bought online, taught his city council *waiata* group to sing a Maori and an Irish song, interposing one with the other line by line, and has sung it to welcome the Irish Consul and an Australian Irish ambassador to Dunedin. The relationship between Maori, an official language of New Zealand (along with English, and sign language), and Gaelic languages will be discussed later in the chapter.

Brown’s reflections on the place of music in the construction of Irish identity in Ireland, in her essay entitled, ‘The tone of defiance: Music, memory and Irish nationalism’ (2012), have helped me understand how powerful music is in the construction of identity, as several of the interview narrative illustrate. Scottish-born Evelyn Entwistle, a teacher of Scots Gaelic, which she learned in Dunedin, New Zealand, taught the Dunedin Gaelic choir to sing in Gaelic for over twenty years. When the choir closed in the early 2000s, after 125 years, she and her husband Bob, who was also active in the choir, found the Dunedin folk club the only place to sing Gaelic songs. Since the interview Evelyn has reached a stage of life where she is unable to teach or sing in public, a pertinent reminder for me of Cathy O’Shea-Miles’s (2004, p. 149) awareness that life stories need to be gathered while the person is still able to tell their story, as mentioned earlier.

Bain McGregor’s narrative about playing the Highland pipes, in a family who came with Scottish migrants via Nova Scotia to the northern settlement of Waipu, in the north of the North Island, adds another story to the topic of Jennie Coleman’s PhD research which traces Scottish descent lines of bagpipe players in the south of the South Island (2003). Uilleann piper Marianne Hepple’s narrative reflects on the importance of knowing some Irish Gaelic in understanding the phrasing and tones of the Uilleann pipes.



### Other memory practices: writing poetry, visual arts, documentary making

In the fourth and fifth sections of the artefact interviews narrators describe their significant commitment to other “memory practices”: writing, poetry, visual arts, and documentary making. Among these are master carver Malcolm Adams, of Scottish and Irish backgrounds, who identifies as a Southern Celt, “a South Pacific Celt” whose carving has been influenced by Celtic and Polynesian styles and mythologies.

Documentary maker, Kathleen Gallagher, a published poet and playwright, places herself first and most importantly within the Irish tradition of poetry. Her New Zealand Irishness is, she believes, an integral part of her work and understanding of the world. The films she makes are, she says, “calling up the voices of people who speak across worlds and spiritual worlds, and bring those spiritual things into reality.” I respond to her understanding because it embodies a spirituality which informs the consciousness that created the traditional Celtic spirals I have used as a visual metaphor for these narratives, or “cultural memory writ” as these visual images embody cultural memory, according to Maggie Williams (2012, p. 94). Writer and publisher, Michael O’Leary, draws on his Irish and Te Arawa, Maori cultural backgrounds in his novel entitled *The Irish Annals of New Zealand* (1991) and poet Bernadette Hall describes how her family’s Irishness has influenced her life and her poetry and also explains how Irish poet Nuala Ni Domhnaill’s writing has influenced her writing.

The sixth section in the artefact is focused largely on spirituality and religion. Malcolm Campbell writes “religious bigotry was an underlying feature of nineteenth century life in New Zealand” (2004, p. 15) which I perceive as expressed in the earlier reluctance to welcome Irish Catholic migrants. I have experienced this attitude in my own life through the chant local state school pupils would deliver as they walked past our Catholic primary school in the 1960s: “Catholic dogs stink like frogs in their mother’s bathing togs” (see Artefact, Introduction). The old sectarian religious divides are still here it seems, but will die with her generation according to Ellen McCormack, who was awarded a Queens Service Medal for her services to genealogy. Several interviewees gave responses about religious differences, but I have also intentionally tried to broaden the discourse into spirituality with an interview with a Presbyterian minister, John Hunt, of Scottish and Irish backgrounds, whose ministry has focused on Celtic spirituality, which is based in the natural world. He is the author of several popular books which aim

to integrate traditional Celtic understandings and prayers into the spiritual lives of New Zealanders. Kathleen Gallagher finds a deep resonance between her Roman Catholic Creation Spirituality and Maori belief that everything has its own *mauri*, or life force. Ann Dooley too feels the similarity between the holiness of the Roman Catholic rituals surrounding death and the Maori tradition of the *tangi*, the ritual surrounding death and burial.

### Playing sport

I have likewise collected interviews about sport as a part of this inquiry into Irish and Scottish cultural identity in Aotearoa. This is a topic which is explored too in academic research, including in Sara Brady's (2012) discussion of Gaelic sports games, such as Irish Hurley, as an aspect of the construction of memory and Irish identity in the United States. She argues that through performing such Irish sports Irish immigrants to the US can retain their "Irishness" and escape from assimilation into American culture, while alternatively, in Ireland, performance in national games such as Hurley offers a way into the host culture for an increasing number of new migrants (2012, p. 208).

These interviews, which are grouped in the seventh section of the artefact, include one with a curler, Stewart McKnight, who lives in the central South Island which is cold enough, in winter, for the outdoor version of this Scottish sport, similar to bowling on ice. Curling I would argue is an expression of identity "through presence in performance" as Sara Brady describes (2012, p. 208), here in the colder South Pacific. Curling has been played in the South Island since the 1870s, according to a history of the curling in New Zealand (Mawhinney, 2002). Stewart McKnight's grandfather curled in Central Otago, as did his father, and his son. The second narratives are from a former New Zealand heavy weight boxer, Charlie Dunn, who attributes his boxing skills to his Irish and Maori, Te Rarawa, backgrounds.

### Holding the stories and cultural artefacts

The relationship between cultural forms in memory practices, as Oona Frawley explores in her edited collection *Memory Ireland: Diaspora and Memory Practices* (2012) finds a rich focus in museums which hold stories of families and communities, and are treasure houses of memory. *Southern Celts* narratives include references to Toitu Otago

Settlers' Museum, in Dunedin (see Sean Brosnahan), Te Papa Tongarewa the national museum of Aotearoa/New Zealand in Wellington (see Artefact, Introduction), and the regional Waipu Museum in Northland (see Patsy Montgomery).

### Twenty-first century Gaels

As acknowledged in Chapter One the narratives contribute “insider” voices and insights from multi-generational family experiences to mainstream historiography like McCarthy’s (2011) exploration of *Irishness and Scottishness in New Zealand since 1840*. *Southern Celts* adds narratives which move the exploration forward another fifty years and more, into the twenty-first century, where international travel, the internet and its many functions such as Skype, enable close communications across the world (see Laura Mills).

In terms of using narratives as data, McCarthy herself used longer extracts from personal stories in her *Personal narratives of Irish and Scottish Migration 1921-1965* (2007), but the extended life story narratives of *Southern Celts* add layered depth and insight into personal lives and families, often across multiple generations. This is a method recommended by Canadian Irish historian Akenson, as noted earlier in the exegesis, and by McCarthy herself.

### Influences on a “Kiwi psyche”

Turning to the second part of the first question: What is there in the “Kiwi psyche” still influenced by the Irish and the Scots who have settled here? Many of the opinions expressed in the interview narratives are already recorded in more traditional history texts referenced in this exegesis. But I will outline some because they show understandings of these influences are still here, but in some cases are changing. One example is a sense of egalitarianism, noted by several people. John Hunt for example, recalls people saying that in New Zealand people may look down, but no one looks up, and he quotes a saying in Scotland “We’re all Jock Thompson’s bairns.” Patsy Montgomery remembered her primary school education in the 1940s which promoted that sense of egalitarianism, directly influenced she believes by the then education minister, later prime minister, Peter Fraser’s Scottishness. Still deeply embedded, she says the attitude is changing with economic globalisation, though she wonders how long

people will tolerate such astronomically different salaries. Tom Brooking, a scholar of the Scots in New Zealand, addresses this in his analysis of Roger Douglas whose economic policies, dubbed “Rogernomics” set in train “this unequalising of our small nation” (Brooking & Coleman, 2003, p. 65). Roger Douglas, he suggests, shared the same radical desire to transform the world as his nineteenth century Scottish Presbyterian forebears, but the consequence now of “Rogernomics” is that “A new breed of jet-setting radicals are turning the dream of our nineteenth century ancestors into the nightmare to escape by sailing half way round the world” (2003, p. 65).

Several interviewees connected the Irish, and the Scots, particularly the Highland Gaels, with hospitality and an open home (Fraser Milne, Kathleen Gallagher and Bain McGregor). Patsy Montgomery attributes New Zealanders’ lack of emotion, even “dourness,” to a central and lowland Scots influence, also an unwillingness to voice opposition to authority. She also notes the Scottish attention paid to women’s education. Writer Keri Hulme also acknowledges the educational influence the Scots have had in New Zealand. Others mention a connection to the natural world to which John Hunt attributes the widespread positive response to the Celtic spirituality he teaches. Bain McGregor describes the “number eight wire mentality” illustrated in Scots inventiveness, such as his grandparents putting grass in car tyres during the depression to keep them running.

### Experiences of colonisation

My final question: Have Irish and Scottish experiences of colonisation affected how they have related to Maori in the colonisation of Aotearoa/New Zealand?

The question was not seeking “easy reminiscence,” echoing Tierney’s comment referenced in Chapter One, and did not receive it. Interviewees gave layered, complex and challenging responses: stories of recognition and respect on a personal level, along with the stories of prejudice, bigotry and the harsh consequences of uneven social power. I would have liked to have edited out some opinions of one Pakeha narrator which I felt showed a spectacular lack of empathy towards oppression, but that was not my task. This was offset for me by Robert Consedine’s interview narrative and his experience of decades of work to educate New Zealanders about their colonial history

and the place of the Treaty of Waitangi in our society, described in the book *Healing our History* (2005) written with his daughter Joanna. In her exploration of the impacts of Scottish ethnicity over time in New Zealand, 1850-1930, Bueltmann acknowledges that Highland-born politician and land reformer John McKenzie's policies were progressive for their time, breaking up the big estates, but failed to acknowledge Maori whose grievances over land were similar to those of Scottish Highlanders cleared off their land (2011, p. 196). Historians Patterson, Brooking and McAloon (2013, p. 279) also note the irony of John McKenzie's purchase of Maori land at a very low price, thus "inflicting damage on another clan society." Given that McKenzie was "profoundly shaped by the Clearances" his action "remains a fracture at the heart of the New Zealand polity." The same excuses, that the settlers were better equipped by history and experience to use the land productively, played out against indigenous American Indians when Scottish Highlanders moved onto their land in the process of colonizing America.

In her narrative Keri Hulme, of Southern Maori tribe *Kai Tahu* and Orcadian backgrounds, describes how her grandmother and great aunt married Maori brothers and lived in fulfilling relationships, despite a significant degree of racism prevalent in the wider society, illustrated in the treatment of a wedding picture sent back to Scotland. This subject of interracial marriage is analysed in *Matters of the Heart* (2013) by South Island scholar, Angela Wanhalla, whose father is of Irish, German and Maori ancestry and mother of Irish and Manx heritage. Wanhalla's comprehensive overview of a two hundred year period provides detailed, often personal and touching insights into individual lives and relationships. Hulme also offers insight into another subjugated voice, this time from the invading army of the empire, the 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, pronounced in Maori as "*Hikete Piwhete*," and shortened to "Hickety Pips." A soldier deserts his post because he can no longer fight Maori who are so similar to his own people. Interviewee narrator Michael O'Leary wrote this story into his song, *Potatoes, Fish and Children*, ascribing an Irish identity to the soldier, as discussed in Chapter Three.

Narrators repeatedly acknowledge that at a macro social level, Irish and Scots migrants, often escaping dispossession in their own homeland, dispossessed Maori in Aotearoa, as

they did indigenous peoples of Australia, Canada, and the United States, confirming as seminal Brazilian educator Paulo Freire articulated, that the oppressed becomes the oppressor (see Robert Consedine). Freire, who taught basic literacy to manual workers, reflected “it is a rare peasant who once promoted to overseer, does not become more of a tyrant towards his former comrades than the owner himself” (1993, p. 28), because the context for the peasant was unchanged, one of oppression. To surmount that he wrote “people must first critically recognize its causes” so that they can take action to create a new situation “one which makes possible the pursuit of fuller humanity” (p. 29). Robert Consedine explains that same laws that dispossessed the Irish in Ireland dispossessed Maori in New Zealand, while benefitting the Irish colonial settlers. His work (see interview) and also that of his daughter and his wife to enable Pakeha New Zealanders to understand the causes and effects of colonisation on tangata whenua, can be seen in Freirean terms as taking action from which “the pursuit of fuller humanity might be possible.”

Sean Brosnahan recalls standing on a South Island *marae*, a traditional community house or village, named for Maori opposition to land confiscation, articulating the irony that his Irish relatives “from across the river” took possession of the land, Maori land. He also describes the change of a Pakeha cousin’s racist attitude to their Ngati Kahungnugnu cousins, over time. This too may be an example of a change which creates space for “the pursuit of fuller humanity.” Ann Dooley, the oldest child of an Irish Catholic family whose family left Belfast because of the dangers of the militarisation of the centuries-old divide against native Irish Catholics, observes that in Ireland they didn’t have a treaty which would have forced the English state to acknowledge their legitimate rights, but here in New Zealand the Treaty of Waitangi provides a legal framework for recognition of Maori rights.

Charlie Dunn from the Northland Te Rarawa iwi describes the ongoing struggle to regain control of land after confiscation by the Crown, the struggle to live on the land, and the complexity of the situation for current and future generations to make a living off the land. This narrative of one iwi illustrates the history of struggle Maori have faced as a result of colonisation, documented in an early edition of emeritus professor Ranginui Walker’s *Ka Whawhai Tou Matou: Struggle Without End* (1990), and a more

recent independent report entitled *Ngāpuhi Speaks* (Huygens, Murphy, & Healy, 2012) from a northern Maori tribe, Ngāpuhi, commissioned by elders of the tribe as an independent response to the tribal claim to the Waitangi Tribunal, which is the government sponsored mechanism designed to bring redress to colonial confiscations. This report uses narrative excerpts of first person responses to the tribunal, which for me brings the text alive.

### Language as “constitutive” of cultural identity

Along with confiscation of land and resources in the process of colonisation, the silencing of indigenous languages is another powerful tool. New Zealand scholar Professor Stephen May (2001) highlights similarities between the struggle for survival of Gaelic languages and of Maori in the context of broader social and political environments and influences, including that of colonisation by force. A later article explores the postmodern concept of hybridity in which “social, political and linguistic identities are inevitably plural, complex, and contingent” (May, 2005, p. 329). Within this, language is not an inevitable feature of identity, but is viewed as a *contingent* factor, though May argues against the opinion held by some scholars that because language can be viewed as a *contingent* factor of identity “it cannot therefore (ever) be a *significant or constitutive* factor of identity” (p. 330).

Interview narratives repeatedly draw parallels between Maori and Gaelic languages. Laura Mills draws the connection between Scottish and New Zealand government support for Scots Gaelic and Maori, such as the use of the language in television programmes. Several interviewees, interested in language, have tried to learn Maori, with some including Sean Brosnahan and Evey McAuliffe also spending time teaching or learning Irish. Maori and Irish Gaelic share similarities in current attempts to encourage wider everyday use of the languages to ensure they are maintained as living languages and there is scholarly work being done about this shared experience. Glynn, O’Laoire and Berryman’s (2009) article entitled *Transformative pedagogy and language learning in Maori and Irish contexts*, draws on three small-scale studies of examples of emerging literacy in Maori to offer strategies which could inform development of similar pedagogy in Irish contexts.

Ruth Lysaght's (2010) PhD thesis entitled *Teanga & Tikanga: A Comparative Study of National Broadcasting in a Minority Language on Māori Television and Teilifís na Gaeilge* explores experience of the two minority language, but national, television channels. She notes,

The inventive ways by which the more traditional elements of language and culture are translated to the television medium also show the many possibilities when the indigenous language is given a space in which to breathe and live according to its own creative potential (2010, p. 2).

There is a story to the process of my finding this thesis that illustrates opportunities to be mobile in this globalising world and to a lesser degree perhaps the “instrumental” value of Irish Gaelic (May, 2005). It provides an example also of the discursive construction of culture and identity mediated by online communication (Frawley, 2012). While exploring a website about Irish networks in New Zealand, I had followed a link for Irish Gaelic lessons in Auckland. Ruth Lysaght replied explaining that she was no longer in Auckland, but in Brittany teaching Irish at a university there. Interested in my research she emailed me a direct link to her thesis.

May explains that the link between language and identity encompasses both significant cultural and political dimensions. The cultural dimension is demonstrated by the fact that one's individual and social identities, and their complex interconnections, are inevitably mediated in and through particular languages (2005, p. 330). This experience is illustrated in *Southern Celt's* interviewee Kathleen Gallagher's interview narrative in which she explains (see interview) that she speaks Maori because members of her extended family have married into Maori families. Her decision to speak Maori rather than Irish is motivated by her belief that Maori is the language of this land and is at great risk of disappearing: “if we don't speak it here no-one will.”

### ***Criteria two: Aesthetic merit***

Moving to Richardson's second criteria: aesthetic merit (Richardson, 2000, p. 936; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 964) for which she suggests the following questions: Does use of creative analytical practices open up the text and invite interpretive responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfyingly complex, and not boring?



In the previous chapter I have discussed how I have used creative analytical and arts-based practices: visual metaphor and different kinds of creative texts offered by narrators including song and poetry. My hope is that by presenting these different kinds of text, and lengthy narratives, this will allow readers who have time and inclination to bring their own interpretation to these complex narratives. It will be readers, both academic and general, who will judge the aesthetic merits and success or otherwise, of these narratives, as I noted in Chapter One, echoing Benson (2013) a narrative scholar in my own field of Applied Linguistics.

In considering the process of writing a research text, Clandinin and Connelly say it is excusable to misjudge an audience and write a text that is not read as meaningful by others, but it is inexcusable not to have a sense of audience and a sense of what it is about one's research text that might be valuable for them (2000, p. 149). My use of autoethnography and arts-based practices aim, as Holman Jones, Adams and Ellis write about autoethnography, "to cultivate reciprocity with and expect a response from audiences," just as they "comment on or critique culture and cultural practices" and make a contribution to existing scholarship (2013, p. 25).

### ***Criteria three: Reflexivity***

Richardson's third criteria is reflexivity (Richardson, 2000, p. 936; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 964) which involves the writer being cognizant of the epistemology of postmodernism, demonstrating attentiveness to how the information was gathered and the ethical issues around this. This also involves ensuring that there is adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgements about the point of view presented in the writing.

I have written about these issues in the artefact introduction and explored them at length in this exegesis. Awareness of the criticism of using autoethnography in academic research as "self-indulgent" has not undermined my own "strong belief that the purpose was legitimate" as Muncey describes, explaining her own response to the criticism she received from readers of her autoethnographic work (2010, p. 93). The real test of self-indulgence she suggests is whether the reader finds value in what has been written. As explained in Chapter One, I have written the introduction following Chang's "analytical

autoethnographic style” with intent, as she describes, to gain understanding of wider society and culture through focusing on personal experience, mine and others, applying “critical, analytical and interpretive eyes” (2008, p. 49). I believe this informs my choice of autoethnography as method and text with a rigour necessary for scholarly research. There have been accusations of “self-indulgence and narcissism,” as Holman Jones, Adams & Ellis describe in their review of the use of autoethnography as method and text in academic writing. (2013, p. 24).

It has taken time and reflection to peel away my understandings of my own experience to discuss these influences in this exegesis. Journaling these memories and experiences has enabled me to capture ideas and understandings in the writing, and as Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre describes, “thought happened in the writing” (2005, p. 970). In an iterative process this has been integrated into the artefact, particularly in the introduction, and the concluding chapter.

I am however left with the feeling that in five or ten years’ time I will still be gaining deeper insights into the choices made in the creation of this artefact. I am heartened by Mauthner and Doucet who explore “degrees of reflexivity” and the difficulty of understanding the unconscious filters through which experience is filtered:

There is a limit to how reflexive we can be, and how far we can know and understand what shapes our research at the time of conducting it, given that these influences may only become apparent once we have left the research behind and moved on in our personal and academic lives (2003, p. 245).

I was surprised at how long it took to settle the section in the artefact about spirituality and religion, and at how strongly a sense of spirituality has become a part of the intensely analytical endeavour of writing this exegesis. I thought I’d finished with these concerns with my earlier collection of interviews, *Faces of the Goddess* (1997), but not so. Therefore it is hard to know what endeavour in my life in the future will tap into concerns which I consciously or unconsciously hold close and which may shed light on what has informed this inquiry. Hindsight may allow me greater understanding of the “what” and the “how” of this narrative inquiry, as an exercise in knowledge production.

Mauthner and Doucet suggest (2003, p. 424) that the more researchers can articulate their role in both the process and product of their research the more confidence a reader might have in the research. I have tried to behave ethically and be transparent about every stage of research and writing, as other scholars have recommended (Chilton & Leavy, 2014; Reissman, 2008). My introduction clearly articulates the questions I set out to answer, and the methods I have used to collect narratives. It briefly acknowledges ethical issues which were considered throughout the process. I explain my understanding that any story is not necessarily comprehensively historically accurate, but still valuable for how it shapes lives. The final chapter reflects on both the process and the narratives and my understanding of myself as an accidental ethnographer of not only individual lives, but also of a number of communities, geographic and cultural.

#### ***Criteria four: Impact***

Richardson's fourth criteria is impact, and her questions to unpack this are: Does this text affect me? Emotionally? Intellectually? Does it generate new questions, move me to write or to act? (Richardson, 2000, p. 936; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 964). Once again these are questions for readers to answer. In her article entitled *Narrative inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches and voices*, Chase (2005, p. 669) quotes Plummer (1995, p. 87):

“For narratives to flourish, there must be a community to hear...for communities to hear, there must be stories which weave together their history....The one –community –feeds upon the other –story.”

There are significant numbers of New Zealanders who share these cultural backgrounds (see Artefact, Introduction) and my hope is these narratives will “speak to the heart” of those who read them, echoing the title of Maureen Molloy's exploration of the *The Nova Scotian Scots at Waipu* (1991). Narrative philosopher Ricoeur (1980, p. 189) also underlines the centrality of community, “It is always a community, a people, or a group of protagonists which tries to take up the tradition – or traditions – of its origins...” He writes that this “communal act of repetition” creates history “and finally makes it possible to write history” and “historiography is the passage into writing, then to critical rewriting of this primordial constituting of tradition.” By his analysis then these

interview narratives are an aspect of the process of historiography and so may become part of future historiography.

Reflecting on Richardson's questions many of these narratives affect me because they evoke people who rest now in death and I don't feel far away from them. One action I wish to sow a seed for, through this inquiry, is that a public exhibition of "The Irish in New Zealand" be held at our national museum, Te Papa, a parallel to "The Scots in New Zealand" 2008-2010, an idea suggested originally by Sean Brosnahan during our interview. I attended the Scottish exhibition and was captivated by it, especially the videos of individual stories. Such an exhibition would be an opportunity for the communities of people with Irish backgrounds around New Zealand to celebrate their histories and their contributions to this society, as Scottish New Zealanders have already done.

In this chapter I have attempted to analyse the contribution this artefact might make to knowledge about Irish and Scottish influences in Aotearoa New Zealand, drawing on Laurel Richardson's four criteria for judging Creative Analytic Practices: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity and impact. I also examined the importance of concepts of truth and memory, and framed much of the narratives in terms of cultural memory practices.

In the following chapter I examine the themes which have become apparent to me in this exploration, including relationship to this land of Aotearoa, the passage of time, and generations.

## Chapter Five: The Generations Pass

Land is more than just a physical locale: it is a mental one that becomes water on the rock of our being (Aluli-Meyer, 2008, p. 219)

Theory acts as a bright light out of which we can now see with full brightness and precision what has always been present and in our midst but before was obscure and more difficult to name and reach (Maddison, 2008, p. 227).

The previous chapter has attempted to assess what the artefact offers readers, both academic and general, in terms of Laurel Richardson's four criteria for judging quality of critical analytical practice in ethnography: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity and impact. This chapter will reflect on themes which have remained my constant companions and are written into the artefact. I will discuss them with particular reference to Clandinin and Connelly's three dimensional frame of narrative inquiry: time, place, and the intersection between the individual and society.

### *A moment of clarity which showed the way into this chapter*

Over time I have realised my engagement with this inquiry has been an heuristic experience. Justin Patton explains that the heuristic inquirer is open "to tacit knowledge within and beyond comprehension," an openness which "illuminates at a deeper more subtle level of experience and self-knowledge" mindfully reflecting on the lived experience of the focus of inquiry. Out of reflection, solitude, meditation, illumination and explication of core themes a sense of the whole is communicated in the form of a creative synthesis (2015, p. 120). The artefact and this exegesis are that creative synthesis which is a product of lived experience of the inquiry: gathering of interviews, reflection and writing, precious solitude, and occasional illumination. I would not however claim to have identified themes which Patton posits "fully and comprehensively depict the essential nature of the phenomenon" (2015, p. 120). My postmodern understandings of the multiple and discursive nature of social and cultural identity which I have explained in earlier chapters (Chuang 2008; Norton 2000;

Weedon 2004) leave me suspicious of claiming anything other than representing individual narratives which narrators have offered in response to the inquiry questions. Over time I have realised that these are issues or experiences that have been explored by others in the academy and which I have attempted in my own way to reference and explore in this exegesis, informed by my own particular experience and perspectives.

I will offer one example to illustrate one aspect of this heuristic experience. At a conference entitled *Creative Ethnography Across Disciplines* in November 2014, I watched a dance performance entitled “*Whenua*,” offered under the description “place responsive choreography and contemplative pedagogies: a sensual experience,” choreographed by Karen Barbour, Head of Dance at Waikato University (Barbour, 2014). The soundtrack included an excerpt from a prominent Maori woman, Eva Rickard, now dead, who led her people in the struggle to regain control of their land. She reminded her audience that the Maori word *whenua*, meaning “land” in English, also means “placenta.” The tradition of burying the placenta in the land where a child is born means the relationship between the individual and the land remains strong over time. Hearing her words I knew that this concept was important for understanding and articulating my relationship to Irishness. My experience with the dance performance illustrates Bagley and Cancienne’s use of dance (as cited in Leavy, 2009). They write that through “dancing the data”... through a choreographed performance, they were able to “encapture the multi-vocal and dialogical, as well as to cultivate multiple meanings, interpretations and perspectives” (Leavy, 2009, p. 161). This dance performance with a musical and vocal soundtrack provided an opportunity for me to gain new insight and understanding.

I have a strong physical sense of place here in Aotearoa, but I also have a deep connection to my internal landscape (Brady, 2005) formed through my genetic connection to my parents and their New Zealand Irishness. I am grateful to choreographer and dancer Karen Barbour, who has a Scottish/Canadian background and *wahine toa*, strong woman, Eva Rickard, for the clarity of this image and the opportunity to reflect and clearly understand that it is my connection to my mother, nurtured through her placenta, and her genetic material, gifted to me in my DNA, which allows me a deep connection to my Irish inheritance physically, psychologically,

emotionally and spiritually. I am also connected to my father's Irishness as his genetic material made me much of who I am. This connection lives in and enlivens me, though I was born and grew up and have lived mostly in these islands in the South Pacific, far away from Ireland/Eire, my Irish family and Irish society/ies. This an understanding that is illuminated for me by Oona Frawley's suggestion that "Irish cultural memory is not centred on the geographic location of Ireland, but is itself diasporic, dispersed among Irish communities and their descendants around the world" (2012, p. 11). I will return to the concept of place as internal and external landscape later in the chapter.

This insight is supported by fiction writers who understand genetic connections to work across generations. Firstly Maori writer and academic, Witi Ihimaera, underlines the importance of this in his novel *The Rope of Man*, "...the genetic information holds us generation after the next in a connection that spells out our personal genealogies, and the strength ... of the double helix is exactly in that capacity to bind" (2005, p. 277). The inter-generational connection is expressed differently by New Zealand writer, Gillian Ranstead, who has family connections to a number of Scottish clans. Her powerful novel '*Girlie*,' already referenced in Chapter One, centres on a family displaced from their Scottish homelands by the Battle of Culloden, who later finds a home in a valley in New Zealand on land gifted to them by Maori friends. The novel explores how the main character, a young woman, learns to understand and live with the effects of the violence and dislocation of past and present generations, able finally to live with a strong sense of self, and a sense of belonging, and consequently a greater understanding of the Maori people who generously gifted her family land and a home. She writes: "Memory is a quicksilver thread woven in and out of our lives through the centuries, illusive and ineffable ... it searches for us, wanting to be found, it chimes like a bell within us, ringing true" (2008, p. 393).

As I write this final chapter, memory "chimes like a bell" along with the understanding that I carry my New Zealand Irishness in my body and my internal landscape, through my relationship to my parents, their parents, and generations before, remembering that I clearly identified people as the most important carriers of culture in the artefact introduction.

***Spirituality: A part of the academic narrative inquiry***

Richardson's suggestion of "...giving into synchronicity...not flinching from where the writing takes one emotionally or *spiritually*, and honouring the embodiedness and spatiality of one's labours" (2005, p. 965) has enabled me to articulate what has become clear to me over time. I am engaged with this narrative inquiry physically, psychologically, emotionally and *spiritually*. This sense of my reality, as presence beyond the apparent physical world, has been my unbidden companion in this inquiry, as it has been all my life

Earlier in my reading I had been excited to find spirituality as an integral part of the academic endeavour in indigenous Hawaiian scholar Manulani Aluli-Meyer's (2003, 2008) work where she describes mind, body and spirit as part of a whole: three points in a triangulation towards meaning. We are part of a larger whole in which the causal/spiritual category of consciousness and causal knowledge "breathes and deepens our connection to all things, all people, all ideas." It is a maturing of our being, "a maturing of objectivity to subjectivity" (2008, p. 60/61). This understanding is a challenge to narrow epistemological frames, but supports my choice of presenting detailed stories of individuals with very different Irish and Scottish backgrounds, who speak as individuals, but whose individual experiences embody a wealth of knowledge and information which throws light on the questions of discursive construction of culture and identity.

While I am generously invited to share Aluli-Meyer's understanding of spirit as part of the academic endeavour, I felt I needed to find a tradition of spirituality in my own cultural background. If not, I feel I would continue the process of colonisation which is a theme deliberately explored in these interview narratives, and a process clearly articulated in Linda Tuhiwai Smith's challenge to non-indigenous academics. In a colonising world which commodifies and uses indigenous spirituality, she writes, it is particularly people in first world nations who, as they become more uncertain about their identity, rights, privileges and very existence, will look to indigenous spirituality to try to make it their own (2012, p. 105). I related to this statement because I have been challenged in my work in the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement, to find my own sense of myself and my spirituality in this land, rather than trying to take on



what I perceive to be aspects of Maori culture and spirituality, and in so doing colonising yet more of Maori resources.

So although finding Aluli-Meyer's integration of her Hawaiian spirituality in her academic research was a source of relief and joy to me, I feel I need to respect and acknowledge the depth of Hawaiian cultural knowledge that can never illuminate my own experience, because it does not come from the culture that has shaped me. I am happy therefore to have found reference to an edited collection of essays that explore how other scholars understand and integrate their spiritual lives into their academic work, by Chang and Boyd (2011) in Holman Jones, Adams and Ellis's exploration of autoethnography (2013, p. 30). Chang and Boyd's text will, I feel, open up possibilities for me in the future to learn how to articulate my spirituality, drawing on the richness of my own Gaelic and Celtic backgrounds, and the experience of a range of scholars writing from their own academic traditions, many of whom will be of Western backgrounds.

In broader qualitative research Guba and Lincoln have suggested that the inclusion of axiology, which they define as the branch of philosophy dealing with ethics, aesthetics and religion, with religion defined broadly to encompass spirituality, would "contribute to consideration of and dialogue about the role of spirituality in human inquiry" (2005, p. 200). By 2011 Lincoln, Lynham and Guba state that in tandem with the postmodern, and they suggest, post-postmodern and poststructural assumptions that there is no "single truth," "we may also be entering an age of greater spirituality within research efforts" (2011, p. 125). I was further heartened to find there are fifteen references to spirituality in the index of the *Handbook of Autoethnography* (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013), offering widely differing experiences by different scholars. So I continue in this inquiry knowing there is a growing academic community of practice, in wider qualitative research, where I can be most deeply who I am.

### ***Celtic spirituality***

My earlier collection of interviews published as *Faces of the Goddess* (1997), exploring women's spirituality, was an attempt to balance my significant engagement and struggle with male theologies in the Church of Rome. So it is somewhat ironic that twenty years

later I have returned to Irish scholar, and Roman Catholic priest, John O'Donohue, who writes that in the Celtic world there was a sense of the visible and invisible moving in and out of each other, "there was no barrier between the soul and the body" (2000, p. 81). Philip Newell (1997), a scholar of Celtic spirituality, emphasises that this tradition highlights the goodness of nature, indeed that the heartbeat of God could be heard in the natural world, concepts echoed by a *Southern Celts* interviewee, Presbyterian Minister, John Hunt. My spirituality is informed by a contemporary understanding of an ancient Celtic spirituality rooted in the cycle of the seasons of the natural world and of personal experience, informed by Webster Wilde's (1997) exploration of Celtic women in legend, myth and history and more modern experience, and Markdale's (1986) in-depth analysis of the underpinning myths related to Celtic women.

This inquiry is rooted and couched in a metaphor of life envisaged in the spirals of Celtic art where all physical reality is connected in and out of time (see Artefact, Introduction), echoed in Rees & Rees's reinterpretation of Celtic tradition, in Ireland and Wales where "defying definition in space the Other World also transcends mundane time" (1978, p. 343). The metaphor of life embodied in Celtic spirals encompasses and allows engagement with Clandinin and Connelly's three dimensional inquiry frames: time, place and the intersection between the individual and social. In academic scholarship these themes of spirituality are explored in Spalek and Imtoul's 2008 edited collection which challenges the marginalisation of spirituality in the social sciences, and, with a Celtic focus, by Laura Beres (2012) who combines narrative practice and autoethnography in her article entitled *A thin place: Narratives of space and place, Celtic spirituality and meaning*, published in a journal which analyses the practice of social work.

***The lens of time: A personal reflection on the passage of time and the passages of lives***

In the six years I have been formally engaged in this three dimensional inquiry space in which all participants change, I have participated in funerals for my father's two younger brothers, and have buried my mother and her only sister, a Roman Catholic, Dominican nun. My sisters, brother and I, are now the ones telling the family stories, as I reflect in the artefact introduction, drawing on our own individual memories, of our

parents and their brothers and sister, their parents' lives, and our families in Aotearoa New Zealand and Ireland. As our older generation dies we, as a family, continue to construct and reconstruct relationships that hold our family and cultural memories. Cultural memory is not a given, according to American Irish scholar, Oona Frawley, who is based in Ireland, it must be constructed and worked towards: "Cultural memory in the diaspora is often a search for consciousness, the quest to fill in what are felt as blanks and losses in the landscape of cultural memory." This loss she believes is particularly profound in second, third and fourth generation Irish (2012, p. 10).

My mother's sister, first generation born in this land, spent nearly seventy years writing to family members in Ireland, though she formally handed the task to us, the younger generation, several years before she died. While I would not say we as second generation on our mother's side and third generation on our father's father's side, feel "profound loss" at the distance we live from Ireland, and our Irish family, my oldest sister, who did feel the loss at the death of much-loved older Irish "cousins" returned from time in Ireland in late 2014 with stories and photos of our generation of "cousins" and their children, so knitting a new generation of family relationships, across the world, constructing and reconstructing that web of relationships as Frawley suggests.

The journeys have been two-way: Children of our Irish families have stayed with family here and travelled around New Zealand, while basing themselves in Australia, before returning home to Ireland. Work commitments have brought the grandson of a sister of our maternal grandmother, Johannah, to New Zealand. In 2015 he met my mother, Eileen, shortly before she died, a powerful experience for both, because in moments of unusual clarity she remembered the names of places in Tipperary she had never seen and family she had never met, yet she had carried them in story all her life, and passed them to us (see Artefact, Introduction).

Looking to the future, my brother, the only one of my siblings who has not been to Ireland, plans to spend some months with his wife there in a year's time when their youngest son will be well settled away from home at university in Dunedin, and one of their daughters plans an exchange semester with an Irish university. Our lives flow backwards and forwards across the world in communication and embodied experience,

renewing relationships and cultural memory in both places, as Oona Frawley describes in *Memory Ireland* (2012, Vol 2).

### ***The passage of time and generations***

Thus in my personal life, and also as an academic researcher and a writer I am acutely aware of time passing and of the generational change it brings. The importance of focusing across generations has been acknowledged (Akenson, 2000; McCarthy, 2011) and discussed. *Southern Celts* interview narratives which encompass generations past, present and the future embodied in younger generations offer a response to these suggestions from historians, which has also been discussed previous chapters.

Multi-generational *Southern Celts* narratives include Denis O'Connor's life and narrative, which weaves within it his father and mother, his daughter, and grandchildren: His father arrived in Auckland from Ireland in 1939, one of his daughters did her doctorate in Ireland and became part of academic life in Dublin for about 15 years, "completing a circularity of life," before her untimely death. Her father describes her as a unique example of how the "New World" informs the "Old World" in ways people could never have dreamed. Several of his grandchildren are of Irish and Maori descent.

Another multi-generational narrative is Ann Corry's, which is peopled with great grandparents who came from Scotland to Otago in the 1850s, her grandfather a drum major in a pipe band, her mother a dancer, an aunt a piper, she, a sister and niece and nephew highland dancers, while she was also a Scottish country dancer and judge, and her daughter a drummer and a piper.

Charlie Dunn's story begins with an Irish great, great, great grandfather who married the daughter of a chief of land around the Hokianga Harbour, in Northland. It holds the lives of his great uncles and aunts, uncles and aunts, he and his wife and their children and grandchildren, a narrative which recounts a struggle to regain control of land from the state and the ongoing struggle to make a life on it, stories that parallel the experience of indigenous peoples around the world, including the Irish (Frawley, 2012).

These narratives, and all the others, invite the reader to consider generational consequences and through this possibly greater understanding of how these experiences have formed wider society in Aotearoa. Narrative theorist Art Bochner describes this invitation as an opportunity for others to think *with* a story rather than *about* it, (citing Frank, 1995, 2004): “theory merges with story when we invite others to think with a story rather than about it” (Bochner & Riggs, 2014).

### *Lenses of place and landscape*

The lens of place in this inquiry references both external and internal landscapes as I have discussed earlier in the chapter. In her dynamic approach to narrative, Colette Daiute describes narrative as a powerful and fertile way to recount events, citing narrative theorist Jerome Bruner’s (1986) “landscapes of action” in ways that animate why those events matter, :Bruner’s “landscapes of consciousness” (2014, p. 5). Australian scholar, of New Zealand Irish background, Patrick O’Farrell, echoes the importance of internal landscape in his meditation on New Zealand Irishness, when he questions how relevant place was for earlier Irish migrants to New Zealand given “...their home was in their head and their heart, Irish people and Irish places, Irish gods and God” (2000, p. 35).

In his article, *A Poetics of Place* Ivan Brady (2005) describes the power of place to form creative consciousness, which this *Southern Celts* research and writing has given me opportunity to understand. Brady writes that life is a process of negotiating internal and external landscapes with “interpretation as necessary to the process as breathing” (p. 985), powerfully illustrated in Denis O’Connor’s narrative when he recalls an epiphany he experience in the often barren landscape of Central Otago, New Zealand, which enabled him to recognise that his father had responded from his own “internal landscape” which was formed in the rocky area of County Kerry in the South West of Ireland, not from the New Zealand landscape he had emigrated to. This realisation had had a powerful impact on Denis’s own ability to make art. His daughter was influenced in her choice of academic discipline and profession through growing up around her father’s artist studio in Waiheke, understandings she took across the world to her work in London and excavations of ancient sites in Scotland and Ireland.

Aluli-Meyer, who draws on her indigenous Hawaiian background, echoes Bruner's concept of "landscapes of consciousness" and Brady's internal landscape: "Land is more than a physical locale, it is a mental one that becomes water on the rock of our being... It is an idea that engages knowledges and contextualises knowing" (Aluli-Meyer, 2005, p. 219). The physical landscapes of Aotearoa and Ireland have "become water on the rock of [my] being" as I have negotiated this inquiry. I have grown up feeling I live on the surface of this land because I have little sense of the Maori history of this land, though I have been able to nurture a connection through being part of a women's spirituality ritual group, celebrating the cycles of the season and internal seasons of my personal life, based on traditions rooted in Ireland and Scotland which *Southern Celts* interviewee John Hunt describes in his narrative about his Presbyterian Celtic spirituality.

Not for me the depth of attachment to place that Irish poet and academic Nuala Ni Domhnaill describes in her reflection on *dinsheanchas* or "place lore," "one of the great branches of knowledge of the Gaelic world, developed orally over millennia and for fifteen hundred years of the written language tradition, through accumulation of story and memory" (Frawley, 2005, p. 24). My experience of this inquiry has however deepened my understanding of the history of some parts of this land; Keri Hulme's narrative is based in the area I grew up in, Oamaru, so now I know there were trails down the East Coast which Maori walked and navigated the rivers to trade food and goods. I am privileged to have been driven around the dunes on the Hokianga Harbour, in Northland and to understand how Charlie Dunn's people lived in this area. Sean Brosnahan's descriptions of Kerrytown, in South Canterbury, now only a gateway in a paddock, enable me to imagine communities of people with whom I would have shared much in common.

*Southern Celts* narrators relate differently to Irish and Scottish physical environments using Aotearoa as a reference point: Ann Corry describes feeling at home in Scotland because the landscape looked so much like the land around Dunedin, whereas Kathleen Gallagher feels the difference of physical landscape between Ireland and Aotearoa: Ireland feels more contained with much more stone, whereas in Aotearoa we have more trees, which she feels lighten and free up the landscape.

### *The lens of the intersection between the personal and the social*

A stone cairn in the back streets of the village I have recently shifted into records that a fort was first built there on the bend in the river in 1864, because it was the furthest point that a river boat could go up the Waikato river, delivering goods to the colonial army. The process of this inquiry has made me more conscious that this land I live on is confiscated raupatu land: The *raupatu* refers to tribes whose territories were invaded and lands confiscated by government (Smith, 2012, p. 13). While I am a granddaughter of colonised Irish Catholic families I am also starkly reminded by this stone cairn of my place as a colonising generation in New Zealand.

I am consequently heartened by Tuhiwai Smith's analysis that

The intellectual project of decolonising has set out ways to proceed through a colonising world. It needs a radical compassion that reaches out, that seeks collaboration, and that is open to possibilities that can only be imagined as other things fall into place (2012, p. xii).

I view this *Southern Celts* inquiry as a part of the struggle to assert humanity, and to create history and knowledge that Smith describes as essential for indigenous peoples, but which I believe will be valuable for all New Zealanders as Aotearoa is now home to people from almost every country on earth. Robert Consedine recalls in his narrative that former Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, crucially supported legislation which backdated the processes of the Waitangi Tribunal, the state funded process which works to bring some restitution to Maori for colonial violence, because he knew his Irish history. Other *Southern Celts* narrators discuss the need for respect for and engagement with Maori language, articulating the complexity of the relationship between language and a sense of identity. *Pakeha* academic responses to colonisation and the Treaty of Waitangi have increased over the decades. These range from an early influential exploration of the Treaty by Dr Claudia Orange (1987) to scholar of Dutch cultural background, Ingrid Huygen's PhD work (2007), which is pertinent to this inquiry as it theorises processes of *Pakeha* change in response to the Treaty of Waitangi. One such response to the Treaty is encompassed in Robert Consedine's work (see interview).

### *A subjugated voice speaks*

This inquiry may also be a small contribution to enabling the subjugated voice, of a Celtic spirituality, to continue speaking across time. Pelagius, whose teachings articulated Celtic understandings, which allowed greater involvement of women and believed in the essential goodness of each person, was banned from Rome and excommunicated in the fifth century, according to Newell (1997), former warden of Iona Abbey in the Western Islands of Scotland, which is itself part of the monastic tradition that flowed out Ireland. Over time the power of the Church of Rome colonised these understandings, leaving those of us brought up in that tradition with teachings of original guilt, rather than celebration of original goodness. I believe that this sense of celebration and acknowledgment of goodness is a healthier orientation to life which is full enough of ordinary griefs and injustices routinely inflicted on trusting individuals.

Brady's ideas (2005) about the power of place – both internal and external landscapes – to form creative consciousness, remind me I have available Celtic and Maori worldviews, both of which hold positive understandings of human experience, grounded in the land, the movement of the seasons, moving in seen and unseen realms, in life and in death, across the generations, as the metaphor of the spirals from Celtic art illustrates. There is reason to dance, sing and celebrate as my father, his twin sisters and younger brother did in the Scottish Hall in Oamaru: all of whom are dead now, but who I recall across time and space.

### ***To live with consciousness in this land***

Critical phenomenologist, Soyini Maddison writes, "Theory acts as a bright light out of which we can now see with full brightness and precision what has always been present and in our midst but before was obscure and more difficult to name and reach..." (2008, p. 227). Perhaps then as she suggests, in the process of living and writing this narrative inquiry, through bringing Clandinin and Connelly's three narrative frames to bear on my own and my interviewees' narratives, while also drawing on a range of other scholars' thinking and understandings, I am able now able to see "with brightness and precision" what is here in my life and the lives and narratives of these other *Southern Celts*. If my response to this heuristic process (Patton, 2015) is to be able to live more consciously in Aotearoa, my hope is that people who read these narratives may also garner knowledge and understanding, by thinking *with* these narratives rather than



*about* them as Bochner and Riggs (2014) suggest, and through this to offer friendship to people of every cultural background. *Southern Celts* narratives and this inquiry might then indeed offer, as Clandinin and Connelly write, possible plotlines for our futures.

What have I achieved in this inquiry? Using narrative methods I have captured life experiences, generously offered, and in turn offer them to readers as a book of whole interview narratives. The practice-led nature of this inquiry has freed me from many constraints and enabled me to include my own story, as an autoethnographic essay, song and poems, which are not the usual ways of representing new knowledge or understandings in broad Social Science, qualitative research. This multi-voiced narrative offers ethnographies of communities and families across generations, articulated through individual narratives. I see this inquiry as a contribution to narrative methodologies and a celebration of the lives of Southern Celts.

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## Appendix I – Consent by Ethics Committee

**From:** Kaye Goldenberg  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 23 March 2010 11:13 AM  
**To:** Andrew, Martin  
**Subject:** SUHREC Project 2010/012 Ethics Clearance

To Dr Martin Andrew/Ms Celine Patricia Kearney  
[BC: Ms Celine Patricia Kearney]

Dear Martin and Celine,

**SUHREC Project 2010/012 An investigation of how people with a Celtic/Gaelic background live out these traditions now in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia**

Dr Martin Andrew/Ms Celine Patricia Kearney

Approved Duration: 01/04/2010 To 01/04/2016

I refer to the ethical review of the above project protocol undertaken on behalf of Swinburne's Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) by SUHREC Subcommittee (SHESC4) at a meeting held on 26 February 2010. Your responses to the review as e-mailed on 16 and 23 March 2010 were put to a nominated SHESC4 delegate for consideration.

I am pleased to advise that, as submitted to date, the project may proceed in line with standard on-going ethics clearance conditions here outlined.

- All human research activity undertaken under Swinburne auspices must conform to Swinburne and external regulatory standards, including the current *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and with respect to secure data use, retention and disposal.

- The named Swinburne Chief Investigator/Supervisor remains responsible for any personnel appointed to or associated with the project being made aware of ethics clearance conditions, including research and consent procedures or instruments approved. Any change in chief investigator/supervisor requires timely notification and SUHREC endorsement.

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- The above project has been approved as submitted for ethical review by or on behalf of SUHREC. Amendments to approved procedures or instruments ordinarily require prior ethical appraisal/ clearance. SUHREC must be notified immediately or as soon as possible thereafter of (a) any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants and any redress measures; (b) proposed changes in protocols; and (c) unforeseen events which might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

- At a minimum, an annual report on the progress of the project is required as well as at the conclusion (or abandonment) of the project.

- A duly authorised external or internal audit of the project may be undertaken at any time.

Please contact me if you have any queries about on-going ethics clearance. The SUHREC project number should be quoted in communication. Chief Investigators/Supervisors and Student Researchers should retain a copy of this email as part of project record-keeping.

Best wishes for project.

Yours sincerely

Kaye Goldenberg  
Secretary, SHESC4

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Kaye Goldenberg  
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# MEMO

TO            Ms Celine Kearney  
               Dr Martin Andrew  
               College of Arts, Victoria University

DATE        28/01/2016

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FROM        Associate Professor Deborah Zion  
               Chair, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee

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SUBJECT     Ethics Application – HREC Approved Application External to Victoria University

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Dear Ms Kearney and Dr Andrew,

Thank you for submitting this request for ethical approval of the project entitled:

**Swinburne University :**    ***"An Investigation of how people with a Celtic/Gaelic background live out these traditions now in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia"***

***(Project approved by Swinburne University HREC).    (Supervisor: Dr Martin Andrew)***

The proposed research project has been accepted and deemed to meet the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' by the Chair of the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval has been granted from **28 January 2016 to 28 January 2018**. Any variations to the protocol must be approved through the original approving HREC and notified to VUHREC.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious events or adverse and/or unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes. Researchers are also reminded of the need to notify the approving HREC of changes to personnel in research projects via a request for a minor amendment. It should also be noted that it is the Chief Investigators' responsibility to ensure the research project is conducted in line with the recommendations outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).'

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.  
Kind regards,

**Associate Professor Deborah Zion**  
Chair, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee

## Appendix II – Research Instruments



FACULTY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, LILYDALE

SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

### Consent Form

**Project Title: Southern Celts**

**Principal Investigator(s): Celine Kearney**

I consent to participate in the project named above. I have been provided a copy of the project information statement and this consent form and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

***Please circle your response to the following:***

- |  |            |           |
|--|------------|-----------|
| ▪ I agree to be interviewed by the researcher                            | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
| ▪ I agree to allow the interview to be recorded by electronic device     | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
| ▪ I agree to my identity and information from the interview being public | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |

I acknowledge that:

- my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation;
- the project is for the purpose of research and not for profit;
- any personal information about me which is gathered in the course of and as the result of my participating in this project will be (i) collected and retained for the purpose of this project and (ii) accessed and analysed by the researcher(s) for the purpose of conducting this project;

By signing this document I agree to participate in this project.

**Name of Participant:** .....

**Signature & Date:** .....

If you would like further information about the project, please feel free to contact:  
Celine Kearney, Canterbury University, [celine.kearney@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:celine.kearney@canterbury.ac.nz) or phone +64 3 364 2933 ext: 4077 or Dr Martin Andrews, Senior Lecturer in Writing, Swinburne University of Technology, Lilydale Campus, Melbourne, Australia  
[mbandrew@groupwise.swin.edu.au](mailto:mbandrew@groupwise.swin.edu.au) or phone +61 3 9215 7114



**FACULTY OF HIGHER EDUCATION, LILYDALE**

**SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

## **Participant Information Statement**

**Project Title: Southern Celts: An investigation of how people with a Celtic/Gaelic background live out these traditions now in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Australia**

You are invited to participate in this narrative enquiry into how people in New Zealand and Australia live out their Celtic /Gaelic traditions

Researcher, Celine Kearney is working with Dr Martin Andrew and Professor Josie Arnold at Swinburne University of Technology, Higher Education (Lilydale), Melbourne.

This research project is being carried out to fulfil the requirements of a Doctorate in Philosophy. The project will involve the production of an artefact, which will be a book for publication, and an accompanying exegesis.

I am approaching about forty people in New Zealand and Australia to ask if they wish to be interviewed. These are people I know, have been recommended or whom I have read about.

Your participation would involve making time available to be interviewed and later to read through the text of the interview to add to or develop any points or perhaps take out anything you think may be sensitive for yourself, family or friends. Your identity, experience and opinions will be clearly available to readers of the book.

If you were to sign the consent form attached but decided later you did not wish to continue your participation, then you are entirely free to do so. You could withdraw your participation at any stage of the process.

The interview will be taped, and tapes, written texts and consent forms will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. All processed data will be stored electronically with password

protection. You will receive a copy of the final interview text and also a copy of the tape if you wish.

If you would like further information about the project, please feel free to contact:

Celine Kearney, Canterbury University, [celine.kearney@canterbury.ac.nz](mailto:celine.kearney@canterbury.ac.nz) or phone +64 3 364 2933 ext: 4077 or Dr Martin Andrew, Senior Lecturer in Writing, Swinburne University of Technology, Lilydale Campus, Melbourne, Australia  
[mbandrew@groupwise.swin.edu.au](mailto:mbandrew@groupwise.swin.edu.au) or phone +61 3 9215 7114

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne's Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact: Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68), Swinburne University of Technology, P O Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122. Tel (03) 9214 5218 or +61 3 9214 5218 or [resethics@swin.edu.au](mailto:resethics@swin.edu.au) **Swinburne University of Technology**