

DISCOVER IRELAND!

*Irish Heritage
from the Celts to the 20th Century*

May 24 - June 4, 2010



Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014

DISCOVER IRELAND!



Londonderry

NORTHERN
IRELAND

Belfast

Enniskillen

Connemara

Athlone

Galway

Dublin

Birr

*Cliffs
of Moher*

Shannon

REPUBLIC OF
IRELAND

DISCOVER IRELAND

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Our aim on this expedition is to gain an appreciation of the wonderful island of Ireland in all its manifestations, both cultural and historical. As the travel guide writer H.V. Morton wrote in 1930 in his famous *In search of Ireland*, 'Ireland is a wonderful country...at any time it is possible to hear two diametrically opposite opinions about everything...including the weather.'

On this journey, we shall aim to meet some of the great Irishmen and women of the past from **Molly Malone to W.B. Yeats**, from **Jonathan Swift to the great 'liberator' Daniel O'Connell**, and from **Oliver Goldsmith and Edmund Burke to Arthur Guinness**. Moreover we shall meet them in the places that they made great and this will place their achievements in context.

We shall not confine ourselves to any particular period of Ireland's history but shall range from the earliest times, as manifest by the **New Grange stone age passage tomb** and the **Clonmacnoice monastic site**. Here the elements of early Celtic Christianity fused into a tradition that was sophisticated and learned at a time when much of Western Europe was in the depths of the Dark Ages.

We shall also investigate the activities of the **Vikings**, who settled on the River Liffey in a place that later became Dublin, and **Medieval Ireland** as the country gradually evolved into one. We shall have **special presentations on these topics at the National Museum of Ireland** in the capital and we shall also visit its country center in County Mayo in order to gain insights into rural life through the ages. We shall also visit the small town of **Birr** which has a surprising claim to fame in the history of astronomy.

We shall pay special attention to the great flowering of literary Ireland from the 18th century to more recent times and shall pay an extended visit to **Trinity College, Dublin**. In the library we'll see the wonderful *Book of Kells* and also see its latest acquisition, an illuminated *Roll of Honour* containing the names of all Irishmen who fought and died on the Allied side in World War II, even though the Republic was neutral (the north, of course, wasn't).

We shall glory in the beautiful buildings in which studied such literary and political figures as **Oscar Wilde, Oliver Goldsmith, Jonathan Swift, Edmund Burke, George Berkeley, and Bram Stoker, of Dracula fame; Samuel Beckett, a Nobel Laureate; and Wolfe Tone, the father of Irish republicanism** the list is endless and **also such scientists as Sir William Hamilton, the inventor of quaternions, and William Parsons the great astronomer**. But we shall not restrict ourselves to Dublin in our search for the literary heritage. We shall visit **Sligo**, the center of the activities of **W.B. Yeats**, poet and another Nobel Laureate. We shall see the museum named for him, the graveyard in which he is buried, and **'The lake isle of Innisfree'** where we shall read aloud this evocative poem.

To gain insights into the 'other' Ireland we shall spend three days in the north. There we shall visit **Enniskillen** - one of the most beautifully situated towns in the world - located on the Fermanagh lakeland. We'll also enjoy the great **Ulster hospitality** for which the province is well known, especially the breakfasts - the famous Ulster fry.

We will visit the fascinating city of **Londonderry** or Derry, depending on your point of view, which boasts the best preserved city walls in Europe. There we shall have two contrasted insights into Irish history. We will visit the **Apprentice Boys museum** named after the lads who slammed the gates on James II's advancing army in 1689, an event commemorated every year. From the walls we shall see **'Free Derry'**, an overwhelmingly republican part of the city on the opposite side of the River Foyle. No visit to the north would be complete without a visit to the **Bushmills** distillery, the oldest in the world, where we shall certainly sample the products, and to the **Giant's Causeway** just along the coast.

We shall also note that the families of **more US Presidents hail from Ulster than from anywhere else**. No fewer than 13 occupants of the White House were of direct Ulster descent, 12 Presidents including U.S. Grant and Woodrow Wilson and General Ross who ate Mr Madison's supper in 1814. He was an Ulsterman too!

We invite you to join us as we explore this magical isle!

LEADERSHIP

Leading this expedition will be **Dr. Ian Stone**. Ian is of Irish descent. He is a member of the University of Cambridge and has degrees in Geology, History and Mathematics. His wife Olga is an international concert pianist who hopes to entertain us twice during our trip. She performs under the name **Olga Eggert** (www.olgaeggert.com). Ian has great experience as an expedition leader and has worked with Betchart Expeditions many times on trips in Britain, Spitsbergen, and Antarctica. Olga has assisted and given recitals during the Scientific Britain Expeditions.

ITINERARY

DAYS 1/2 USA TO DUBLIN - TRINITY COLLEGE

Fly from home to Dublin Airport. Meet leaders at the airport and transfer to *O'Callaghan Mont Clare Hotel in Dublin (3 nights)*. After a welcome morning rest, we will take an afternoon stroll in central Dublin focusing on Trinity College where we will enjoy the fine old buildings, the statues of Burke and Goldsmith. We will also visit the world famous library where, among other books, we shall see the *Book of Kells*, an illuminated document of the four gospels in Latin and the most priceless manuscript in Ireland. Welcome social.

DAY 3 DUBLIN - NATIONAL MUSEUM

Today we shall increase our knowledge of Dublin with an extended visit to the National Museum of Ireland, where we will have a presentation on the Vikings and their significance in the settlement and development of Ireland. In the afternoon we shall visit the Church of Ireland (Episcopalian) St Patrick's Cathedral of which Jonathan Swift was Dean for many years. Within the building we shall see, and take note of, his famous strictures against those who slept during sermons! Not far away is the Guinness Brewery. Here we will have an informative tour and we hope to refresh ourselves preparatory to visiting a second Church of Ireland cathedral, Christchurch, with its fine gothic architecture. Continuing our tour around the city we will see the General Post Office, the focus of the Easter Rising in 1916. In the evening we will enjoy our welcome dinner and a recital played by Olga Stone, our co-leader. B,D

DAY 4 POWERSCOURT & MEDIEVAL IRELAND

We shall have our first view of the Irish countryside today with a visit to the lovely Powerscourt Gardens situated about an hour from Dublin in the Leinster Hills. The house is only a facade because it was burnt down accidentally on November 4, 1974. It was partially rebuilt in the 1990s. But the chief glory of Powerscourt is the gardens. They are regularly voted some of the loveliest in the world. We shall take a slow stroll through them enjoying their bucolic calm, sensational setting, and the wonderful variety of plants. In the afternoon we shall return to the National Museum of Ireland for a presentation on Medieval Ireland and in the evening we shall enjoy a discussion on Dublin through the eyes of American visitors (ourselves). B,L

DAY 5 NEW GRANGE - BATTLE OF BOYNE & ENNISKILLEN

Our first stop today is the famous stone age tomb at **New Grange**, a prehistoric World Heritage Site. It was built in such a way that at dawn on the shortest day of the year, the winter solstice, a narrow beam of sunlight illuminates for a very short time the floor of the chamber at the end of the long passageway.

Close to New Grange is the site of the **Battle of the Boyne** fought on 1 July (old style) 12 July (new style) 1690 at which the forces of King James II (Roman Catholic) were defeated by those of King William III (Protestant), thus determining the future path of Irish history. For years

the battle was ignored in the Republic, and celebrated passionately in the north, but in the new spirit of reconciliation an informative visitor center has been built where we shall learn about the events of the day and its consequences. It is interesting that this was the William who gave his name to the **Hill Williamites, or Hillbillies**, one of the many connections between Ireland and the USA.

We shall then wend our way north and shall cross the border into Northern Ireland outside the pleasant town of **Cavan**. En route to **Enniskillen** we shall visit **Devenish**, an ancient monastic site. Devenish was founded in the 6th century by St Molaise. It was raided by Vikings in 837 and was burned in 1157, but in the Middle Ages it flourished as the site of St Mary's Augustinian Priory. We shall then check in at the *Killyhevlin Hotel in Enniskillen (3 nights)*. In the early evening, we shall stroll around Enniskillen, taking in the castle, a remarkably well preserved building. This was **the ancestral home of the McGuires** but their stronghold was captured and retaken many times by the O'Donnells, the O'Neills and the English. B,D

DAY 6 LONDONDERRY - BUSHMILLS & GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

Today, we'll head north from Enniskillen towards Derry, formally known as **Londonderry**, where we shall walk around the finest preserved city walls in Europe. On our walk we shall pass the gates famously slammed shut in the face of James' army by the apprentice boys of the city, on 5 December 1689, thus precipitating the historic siege of the city which lasted for 109 days until a relieving fleet ascended the River Foyle. This gave rise to the great slogan of unionists from that day to this 'No surrender!' From the walls we shall observe 'Free Derry,' a republican enclave on the other side of the river.

We shall certainly note that citizens of both persuasions now appreciate that Londonderry prospers because of peace ... and prosper it does. We shall then proceed to **Bushmills** via the town of **Portrush**. This is the site of the oldest legal whiskey distillery in the world and we shall certainly stop off to sample the products.

Our next call will be the geological wonder of the **Giant's Causeway** from which the huge Finn McCool used to hurl rocks at his counterpart in Scotland. One of these was an enormous sod of earth taken from Lough Neagh, in the middle of Ulster. The giant's aim was poor because the earth landed in the middle of the Irish Sea...and that is how the **Isle of Man** was formed! We shall then return to Enniskillen by the backroads of Ulster. B,D

DAY 7 SLIGO - YEATS MUSEUM - FLORENCECOURT - MARBLE ARCH

Today's we'll have an early morning departure for **Sligo**, in the Republic, and the country made famous by W.B. Yeats. We shall visit the **Yeats Museum** in the town and shall pay our respects at his grave in the village of Drumcliff. We shall also see the site immortalised in his most famous poem 'The lake isle of Innisfree.' We will take a volume of his poetry with us and have appropriate readings at the various places.

In the afternoon we shall return back over the border to visit **Florencecourt**, one of the finest palladian mansions in Ireland and the former seat of the Earls of Enniskillen. This is now in the care of the National Trust and affords fascinating insights into how the nobility lived in the 18th century. Close to it are the **Marble Arch Caves**, some of Europe's finest, where we shall hope to descend...and to reemerge! B,D

DAY 8 TO GAELTACHT - CARROWMORE TOMBS & BIRR

Today we head southwest into the Gaeltacht, that part of western Ireland where the Irish language is often used in everyday speech. Our first stop will be the **Carrowmore Tombs**, an assemblage of 30 megalithic tombs, another stunning prehistoric site.

We will then soon arrive at the country part of the **National Museum of Ireland** for an extended visit during which we will have a presentation on rural Ireland especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. Much mention will be made of the tragic famine in the mid 1800s which led

to the depopulation of much of the country and to physical and mental scars that persist to this day. We shall continue our journey inland to **Birr**, a little town lost in the central Irish plain, where tourists are very few and where we may hope to enjoy the real Ireland, free from any taint of tourism. Our base will be the *County Arms Hotel (2 nights)*. B,D

DAY 9 ATHLONE & BIRR CASTLE

We shall start our day by heading towards **Athlone**, the 'capital' of central Ireland where we shall see the Norman castle, and then to the Clonmacnoise monastic site, strategically situated at the junction of three of Ireland's provinces, Munster, Leinster and Connaght. Here we shall again steep ourselves in the distant past, going back almost as far as St Patrick himself.

After lunch we shall explore the charming town of **Birr**, the best preserved Georgian town in Ireland. In the afternoon we shall have a stroll around Birr visiting the grounds of Birr Castle, the seat of the Earls of Rosse, where we shall have a most unusual sight. This is the '**Leviathan of Parsonstown**' which was the largest telescope in the world from 1845 until 1918. Parsons is the surname of the Earls of Rosse and the third Earl was an enthusiastic and very competent astronomer. The telescope is 6ft in aperture and the original mirror weighed 3 tons. But it was not used immediately after construction because the Earl was busy with famine relief programmes. He was also active in politics supporting Roman Catholic emancipation. When the famine retreated the Earl, who in addition to his Dublin degree had a first class degree in mathematics from Oxford, used his telescope as often as possible and it was he who discovered the spiral nature of many nebulae and named the 'crab' nebula. The instrument has recently been refurbished. B,L

DAY 10 CONNEMARA

On this day we have a tour of the beautiful Connemara countryside and the evocatively named **Joyce's Country**, named after one of the prominent local families. We shall call in at the little town of Clifden where we may see the landing place, in 1919, of the first aircraft to cross the Atlantic. We shall check in at the lovely *Currarevagh House Hotel* where we will stay *2 nights*. In the evening our guide Olga will give a piano recital after dinner. B,D

DAY 11 CLIFFS OF MOHER & THE BURREN WAY

Today we shall head for County Clare. Our first stop will be the **Cliffs of Moher**, the highest in Europe at 214m above the Atlantic Ocean. From the top one can almost see America! In the afternoon the hearty among us will walk a portion of the **Burren Way**, a long footpath that winds through the limestone landscape of the Burrens with its unique plant assemblage. We shall then return to the hotel for the final evening of our trip and enjoy a festive farewell dinner! B,D

DAY 12 SHANNON TO USA

After breakfast we will transfer to the airport for our flights back to the USA.

COSTS & CONDITIONS

Expedition Fee: \$3,850 per person twin share (plus air \$695 + tax from JFK to Dublin, with return from Shannon). Air Fares Are Subject to Change. *Single Supplement:* \$795.

Expedition Fee Includes: Land transport; group airport transfers; accommodations twin share; all breakfasts; 2 lunches & 7 dinners; entrance fees; tips to local guides; baggage handling; leadership, administration.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare (quoted separately); independent transfers; 8 lunches & 2 dinners; gratuity to expedition leader; personal items such as laundry, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, snacks; personal insurance, or foreign airport departure taxes.

What to Expect: This expedition is for travelers who would like to explore the fascinating heritage of Ireland, led by an outstanding historian. This is a rich historical experience which will enable travelers to gain a deep appreciation of the heritage of the emerald isle, from prehistoric times to the modern day. The group will travel from 2 to 6 hours by bus or van many days. There will be special lectures at museums, walks in historic towns and across the Burren, with piano concerts by Olga Stone. The trip will be at a leisurely pace suitable for discovery. It will be early summer with midday temperatures in the 60s with a little rain about every third day. The expedition will be a tremendous experience for travelers with an appetite for adventure who would enjoy an indepth historical journey of Irish discovery! (No smoking in vehicles, during lectures, or meals please.)

Air Fare & Airline Ticketing: Please phone **Marisa at Betchart Expeditions, (800) 252-4910** for information about the recommended flights. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Reservations, Deposits & Payments: To reserve a place on this expedition, please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form to: **IRELAND Expedition, Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435.** Balance of land fee is due 60 days before departure.

(please turn over)

RESERVATIONS

#1138

YES! I/We want to join the **IRELAND Expedition, May 24 - June 4, 2010**, offered by Betchart Expeditions Inc. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$_____ (\$500 per person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _____ Age _____ Sex _____

_____ Age _____ Sex _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone: Home (____) _____ Work or Cell (____) _____

Email #1: _____ #2: _____

Membership (please circle): AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference: _____ Twin _____ Twin share _____ Single
_____ Nonsmoker _____ Smoker

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please mail to:
IRELAND Expedition
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable up to 60 days before departure less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There is no refund after the 60-day period unless your place is resold, then only the \$100 per person handling fee is withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals or other expedition features.

Questions: Please call **Marisa Eide, Betchart Expeditions Inc., (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910.**

Responsibility: *Betchart Expeditions Inc. acts only as agent for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels and exercises every care possible. Betchart can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident, or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, terrorism, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or to cancel any tour prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.*

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