



# THE BUTLER SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

December 2009 – No. 31



*This Newsletter comes with every good wish for  
Christmas and the New Year*

The 15th Butler Society Rally was in August in Kilkenny. This year we had the Society dinner in the Long Gallery which looked magnificent, lit by candles with our ancestors looking down at us from the walls. Yet again Roger Butler from Australia has chronicled the Rally and this will appear in the next Journal.

At the TGM, we elected as a vice-president Piers, Viscount Mountgarret.

A television documentary has been made of Kilkenny, which includes the last Sunday of the Rally when we attended morning service in St Canice's and then had lunch in the Castle. You may be able to get it up on Kilkenny 400 <http://www.rte.ie/news/2009/11/16/nationwide.html>

We are hoping to get a disc that we can send to people who wish to see it.

The photograph of the participants at the rally can be bought from:

[eoinhennessyphotography@gmail.com](mailto:eoinhennessyphotography@gmail.com)

7x5 cost €15; 8x6 = €20 and 12x8 = €25

**WE are delighted that David Butler is planning a week-end in Madrid between Thursday 7th May and Sunday 9th May 2010. The dinner will be on Saturday the 8th. There will be a day out to somewhere off the tourist track – possibly La Granja – on either the Friday or the Sunday. In the next newsletter we will give you the details.**

**I can say from experience that it is always a most enjoyable occasion and we have the chance to visit places with David Butler who is such a knowledgeable and fascinating guide. We are very grateful to him for all the work he does.**

Australian Hinton Lowe, who has nobly been the Secretary of the Society in Australia, for many years, says that at 88 it is time to retire. I would like to express the gratitude of the Society to Hinton and Anne for all the stalwart work they have done.

His successor is David Kitchen and his wife Barbara have agreed to take on the job and to whom we are very grateful. Their address is 15 Chestnut Street, Surrey Hills Vic. 3127 AUSTRALIA Ph. 03 9808 6644. David's grandmother was a Butler and he has been a member of this Branch for some years.

## **The Butler Journal**

The editor of the journal, Dr David Butler, intends bringing out the next journal at the end of 2010. He would welcome articles from members and non-members. The contributions can be on history, geography, anthropology, archaeology etc. besides genealogy/family history. The one criterion is that they should add to the existing literature of Butler family interest. They may take the form of articles, notices, book reviews, extracts from historic documents etc. Illustrations would be appreciated. His address is Carrigeen Castle, Cahir, Co. Tipperary IRELAND e-mail [carrigeencastle@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carrigeencastle@yahoo.co.uk).

Melo attended the memorial service for Sidney Butler who died on July 29th 2009. Sidney had been a very early and enthusiastic member of the Society and was a long standing Vice-President, he was also chairman of the American Butler Society. The service took place near Cold Spring Harbor on Long Island in St John's, the pretty white, clapboard church where Sidney and his wife Aileen had worshiped for many years. A more comprehensive obituary will appear in the Journal.

In New York, Melo stayed with Bill and Janey Butler in their attractive house on 10th Street and she had

dinner with them in the Harvard Club. Another night she dined with Helen Butleroff-Leahy and her husband. Her ancestors were from Russia and she described how, as members of the exiled Russian nobility in New York, they had worked at jobs such as driving taxis etc in the daytime, but at night they put on their finery including long white gloves and held formal receptions and balls.

Melo also visited with Sophie McConnell née Sweetman. Many of us will remember her cousins Juanita and Brigid from Dublin. Sophie's great grandfather bought tracts of land in Minnesota so that Irish men could farm there. She is the great great, (am not sure how many) niece of General Sir William Butler who was the author of some remarkable books about his adventures in Canada and on the Gold Coast.

Sadly, besides Sidney Butler another of our Vice-Presidents, Mel Butler from Canada has died he came to many rallies, often with one or more of his grandchildren and we are going to miss him very much.

We were sorry to hear of the death of Eileen Pitman, who died earlier this year at the age of 104, she could remember the newsboys running down the street with placards announcing the fate of the Titanic and was staying with her grandfather at Trobolgan in County Cork when war was declared in 1914. Her husband, Chris Pitman was a great supporter of the Society when it was first founded.

Eileen and Chris's daughter, The Hon. Mrs Valerie Wellesley died suddenly a few months after her mother. We are going to miss her as she came to all the rallies and had indeed booked into the last rally. John Steggles, who was a generous supporter of the Society and a Trustee of the Ormondes Estates, died last August at his home in Florida. Obituaries will be in the Journal.

We are very pleased to hear that Imogen Butler, the daughter of John and Caroline Dunboyne, is engaged to Dario Marangio from Brindisi in Italy and offer them our best wishes for their future happiness.

**John Dunboyne writes:** "Who do you think you are?" the BBC television series in which well-known personalities play detective in search of their family history, did a lot to stimulate interest in genealogy in the British Isles. The format has since been licensed to other countries. In Australia, the final episode of their second series was broadcast on 1st November 2009 and featured John Butler, the Australian rock musician. In this programme, John, with some help from his distant cousin Ralph, traced his Butler ancestors back to a formidable singing matriarch Elizabeth Ann Gudgeon Butler, a poor immigrant to the Australian goldfields who seems to have been born in about 1852 in Norfolk, England.

The Australian production company, Artemis, even sent a researcher to Sussex, England to trawl through my father Paddy Dunboyne's files but sadly we were unable to find out any more about Elizabeth's origins. If anyone comes across any leads, I reckon John Butler would be grateful to hear of them

### **Website**

The Society's website, [www.butler-soc.org](http://www.butler-soc.org), continues to attract new members and to provide the membership with a valuable forum for their genealogical research. The "Desperately Seeking" page generates a remarkable number of replies from the general public. Your web master is Lord Dunboyne, ([johndunboyne@aol.com](mailto:johndunboyne@aol.com)).

To enter the Members Only section of the website, USER NAME = aboo, PASSWORD = hudibras.