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**Subject:** McHale Clan Reunion 2020

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Dear McHale Clan

McHALE CLAN REUNION 14-16 JULY 2020 AT THE GATEWAY HOTEL, SWINFORD, Co MAYO

- Okay, rest period over, now it's time for more...

- Thank you all those who sent me emails commenting on my MacHale Clan history research (all positive, I have to say). There is more in my research than I included in that narrative and am always grateful for new leads, criticisms and insights. Please feel free to float any ideas - creative thinking within the historical context is a valid way to do history, which is an insightful process rather than a one-off chronological record.

- Regarding the McKeale-McHeale versions of the name, I thought that any present-day spellings commencing with a K would be remnants of older times but a recent contact with McHale descendants has revealed a flow in the opposite direction. Their ancestors in the first two generations in the US spelled the name McHale but the next two McKale, which underlines the importance of where the emphasis is placed. And on that note, I keep reading on a number of websites that Archbishop John MacHale was the first to use that spelling (i.e. Hale) which you will have gathered from my last Newsletter cannot be true. A major part of McHale Clan history research is filtering out what is patently false, and we have inherited an awful lot of red-herrings!

- In my last Newsletter I mentioned the McKeals of Lahardane sharing landownership with the Bourkes (of Crossmolina), the McKeales at Ballinglen Castle (serving as kerns with the McDonnells) and McHeali at Ballycastle (the Bourke HQ on the northern coast). I now want to add the McHales who were living at Killala Bay sharing land ownership with the Bourkes of Castlelackan (an important branch of the Tirawley Bourkes). I have attached a Word doc with screenshots from the Cromwellian Mayo Book of Distribution showing the Killala Bay McHale landownership in the late 1630s/early 1640s. The name is spelled: McHele, McKelly, McHealy and Heale (and in the records of James I, who assumed the throne in 1603, in the same area the name is McHely). This reinforces one of my closing comments in my last email that any McHale Clan history which omits Bourke history has to be a non-starter, and to that I will add that any comprehensive Mayo Bourke Clan history which omits McHale history is deficient at its core. I have been researching Bourke history which reads like a collection of unconnected events with free-floating family trees, a situation I hope to address through my recent contacts with leading members of the Bourkes.

- Here are the locations of the three McHale townlands at Killala Bay:

Doonamona: <https://www.townlands.ie/mayo/tirawley/templumurry/lackan-south/doonamona/>

Lackanhill: <https://www.townlands.ie/mayo/tirawley/lackan/lackan-north/lackanhill/>

Rathnawoorau: <https://www.townlands.ie/mayo/tirawley/templumurry/lackan-south/rathnawoorau/>

- A bit more visual history...I have attached a screenshot from an olde (17th century) map of the east side of Lough Conn showing (at the top right) Beaghheal which translates as 'the Heal birchgrove' or 'the birchgrove of the Heals'. I can say this with some confidence as one branch of my family in Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon lived in a house called Birchgrove and the townland is still Beagh Brabazon, 'the birchgrove of the Brabazons'. I have tried to find BeaghHeal on later maps but no luck. The location is directly opposite to Lahardane which is on the west side of the lough. Close by, but off this map section, is the townland of BallyMcRedmond which is coincidentally the name of one of the townlands at Lahardane the McKeals/Heals owned (in common

Dailyworktownland which is considerably the name of one of the townlands at Laraghare the increase in the area owned (in common with the Bourkes). Here is the location of Beagh Brabazon: <https://www.townlands.ie/roscommon/moycarn/creagh/creagh/beagh-brabazon/>

- In conversation with a local historian here in west Co Cork, I learned that Columbus, Ohio has a large Mayo population (some from older US lineages and others newer immigrants). This was coincidental with individual research I was doing on McHales who settled in Ohio. Migrants from particular areas back Home would settle in places where friends and relatives had already established themselves. This is probably old news to many of you, but worth mentioning as something to bear in mind when researching ancestry (e.g. why in Ancestry and Family Finder do I have so many distant relatives in Alabama and Tennessee?).

- Of interest...In the 1930s folk stories from around the country were collected and written down. The collection is online, dúchas.ie: <https://www.duchas.ie/en/src?q=mchale&t=CbesTranscript> As you can see, you can word-search the collection.

- For those in the DNA project, Gedmatch has updated its site. Login to the new version - Genesis Gedmatch - rather than the old: <https://genesis.gedmatch.com/select.php> All the data has been transferred from old to new.

- A renewed call for male McHales to take the McHale genetic marker test. It costs \$23 (includes postage). Very simple and cheap and adds both to the sum of our collective knowledge and your individual histories. Please contact me for the ordering details. And remember that a negative can be just as valuable as a positive in any research - I tested for male Brabazon and came up McHale!

- And still with DNA research, here is an interesting YouTube video on the work being done on the genetic analyses of the Irish population: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QjRHa7wASg&feature=youtu.be> And if you like the Youtube presentation you may also like to read *The Origins of the Irish* by J P Mallory (Thames & Hudson 2017 paperback) loaned to me by Shawn McHale (thanks!). It covers archaeology, mythology, linguistics and genetics (in the chapter *Skulls, Blood and Genes*). From the genetics chapter: "Geographically, most Irish genes would appear to link with a refuge area [from the Ice Age] in southern France or northern Iberia."

- Please feel free to use the Newsletter for posting any McHale-related news or searching for ancestral connections. I'm only too happy to help out in individual research.

\*\*\*As part of our preparations for the Reunion, could you all bring your national (and State) flags (small and/or large)? I want us to show the international character of the Clan - a case of 'Bring It All Back Home' (yes, a huge Dylan fan!) - which will make an excellent pic for *The Western People* and *Connaught Telegraph*. The McHale flag (once we have the Clan emblem) will be side-by-side, of course, as will that of the County Mayo. I have my two Tricolours in the attic ready for action!\*\*\*

LE CHÉILE!



Michael Brabazon      Moyler  
McHele.docx



