



IRISH ANCESTRY IN HONG KONG

MAPS & GUIDE

ST MICHAEL'S & HONG KONG CEMETERIES



Photography by Luc Carson

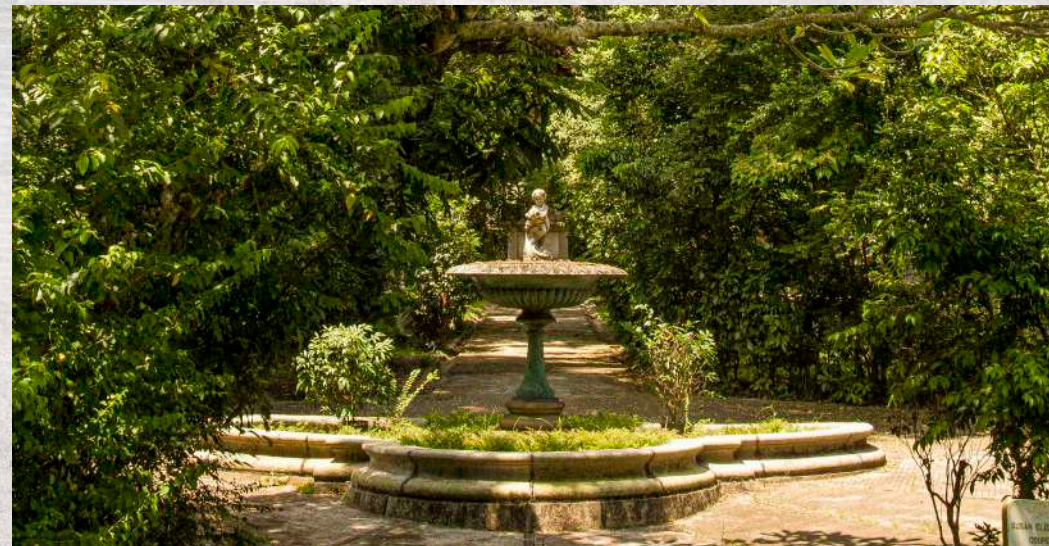


Message from Consul General of Ireland

Honouring the dead has been a tradition in Ireland since early prehistoric times. Some megalithic structures in the west of Ireland date from between 6400 BCE and 4600 BCE, far earlier than anywhere else in Europe. Newgrange – dating to 3200 BCE – is Ireland's best-known passage tomb and has been designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Given Ireland's famous association with storytelling, it is not surprising that the story of modern Ireland is punctuated by tales of death, dying and references to Irish funeral traditions. James Joyce named his final masterpiece *Finnegan's Wake* and indeed the enduring influence of the Irish wake is evident in both Irish and American culture, including Anne Enright's 2007 Booker Prize winning novel *The Gathering*. We cannot neglect to mention the enduring classic; Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

As well as monuments to the dead, the Irish have always held festivals and events to remember, honour and celebrate our ancestors. On occasion, we have also been known to take a peek into the spirit world! But this is not unique to Ireland. China's Mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor, Mexico's Day of the Dead, Romania's Merry Cemetery and Egypt's Pyramids of Giza, among others, shows the diversity of ancestor remembrance traditions all over the world. In Hong Kong, I have been particularly taken by the Ching Ming (Grave Sweeping) and Hungry



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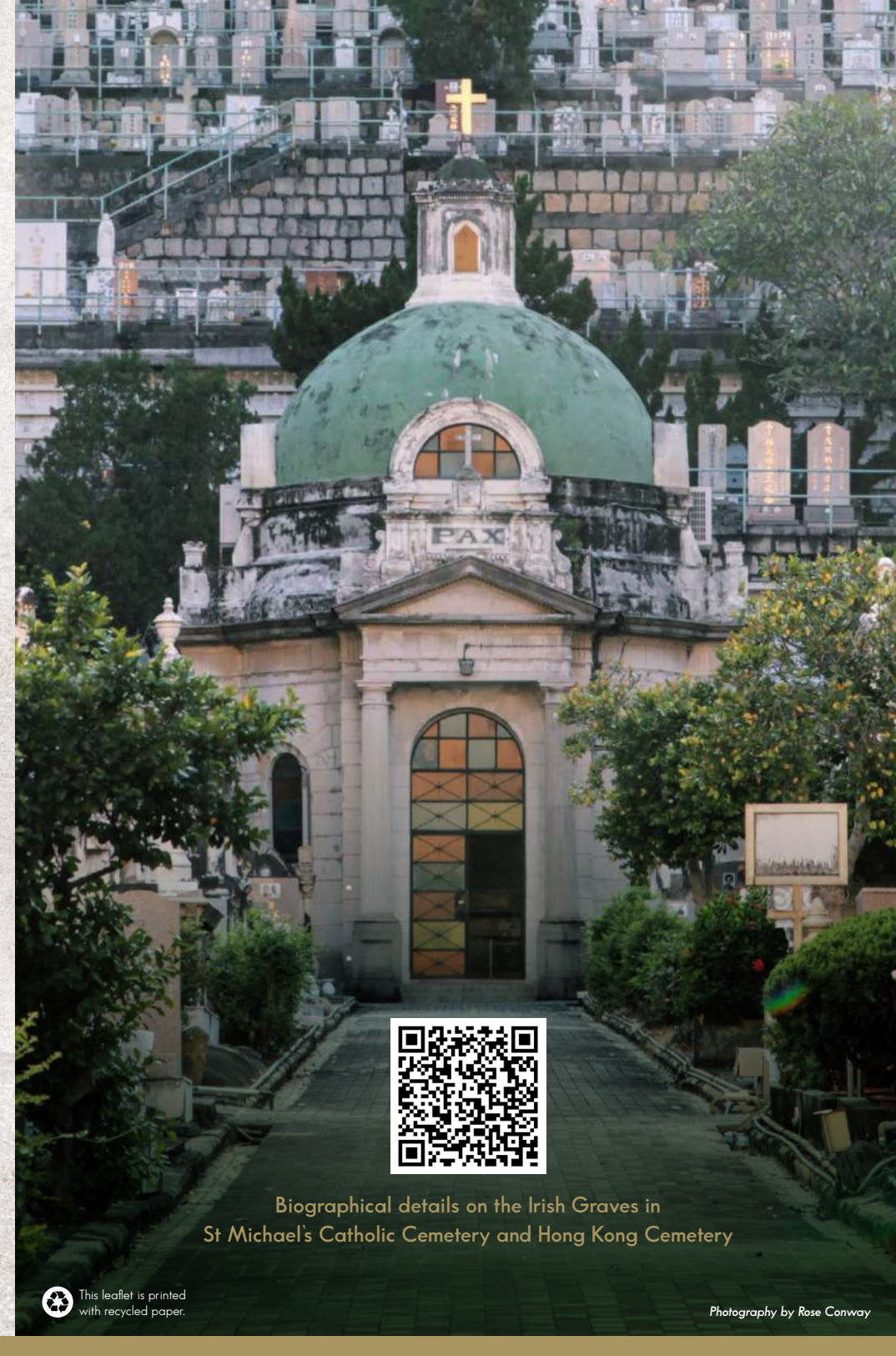
Photography by Rose Conway

Ghost Festivals as well as the centuries old feng shui traditions attaching to ancestral graves across the New Territories. For Ireland, the month of November is long held as a time of remembrance for the souls of the departed. We can trace this back to the Celtic harvest festival of *Samhain* which is observed on evening of 31 October and the day of 1 November. The arrival of Christianity may have morphed this festival into the eve of All Saints' (also All Hallows') Day. With Irish migration to the United States, All-Hallows' Eve, gradually transformed into the more recognised secular festival of Halloween, a much loved time of revelry in Hong Kong.

Irish history is steeped in stories of emigration and, indeed, record numbers of our Irish ancestors travelled west to the US to escape hunger and start a new life at the height of the Irish famine in the 1840s. Some, however, chose to find new opportunities and a new life in Hong Kong. Most of those who left Ireland for the four corners of the world never returned; and the Irish dead in Hong Kong are largely concentrated in two cemeteries – St Michael's Catholic Cemetery and the adjacent Hong Kong Cemetery. Dating to 1848, St Michael's is the oldest catholic cemetery and the Hong Kong Cemetery, founded in 1845, is the oldest western cemetery in Hong Kong. Both cemeteries contain historic stone monuments and graves which present a colourful picture of the personalities in old Hong Kong – Irish included – who were a key part of Hong Kong life over the past 180 or more years.

It is said that "cemeteries are like a giant library of stories", the Consulate General of Ireland has produced this "cemetery guide" to aid you in discovering some of the Irish stories in Hong Kong since the 1840s. We are indebted to many historians and scholars in our research not least the seminal work of Patricia Lim's *Forgotten Souls: A Social History of the Hong Kong Cemetery*, as well as the *Hong Kong Memory Project* and Patricia O'Sullivan's *Policing Hong Kong: An Irish History*.

David Costello
Samhain 2022



Biographical details on the Irish Graves in
St Michael's Catholic Cemetery and Hong Kong Cemetery



THE IRISH IN HONG KONG CEMETERY (BY SECTION)

📍 1J Wong Nai Chung Road, Happy Valley, Hong Kong
 🕒 9:00am-6:00pm (Mon-Sun)

Section 2	Daniel Hill Williams James Thompson William Edward Wilson	Section 12 A	James Seybourne Bailey John Henry Maycock Josephine Marsh	Section 17	James Robert Brunker Marianne Molyneaux M Mulholland	Section 26	Gillie Brake
Section 4	William Brereton	Section 13	Minnie Caroline Potts Peter Ryves Marsh	Section 18	Richard Henry Smythe	Section 27	William Marchett
Section 7	Andrew "Tony" Jackson Eliza Mulholland James Maynard	Section 16 A	Charles Austin-Gardiner Derby John Hunter Hugh Austin-Gardiner	Section 20	Francis Dill W McKinney	Section 31	Archibald McKane Ella Edward Mudie Robert Marshall
Section 8	Charles Fritzell Rev C Gilbert Booth William McMicken	Section 16 C	Laura Frances Brereton Mary A Mahon	Section 21	Maurice Anthony Maude Norman R K Walker	Section 33	John Edwards
Section 9	John Rice Robert Perceval	Section 16 F	James C Hirlong Margaret Anne Bond Thomas Nellow	Section 23	Henry Aeneus Sidford Margaret Elizabeth Goggin Margaret Myles Goggin Stephen William Goggin	Section 37	William Hamilton
Section 10	Dr William Aurelius Harland		John Charles Power	Section 24	John McConnell William Dorman	Section 38	James Hopkins Robert Anderson
Section 11 A	Eldred Pottinger John Theophilus Boileau					Section 40	Frances Kingsmill
						Section 41	Elizabeth McBride Bracken Marie "Josephine" Bracken

- Sections
- Sections with Nature Sight
- Slopes
- Stairs
- Monuments & Graves
- Easy Path
- Fountain
- Toilets



THE IRISH IN ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CEMETERY (BY SECTION)

📍 Wong Nai Chung Road, Happy Valley, Hong Kong
 🕒 8:00am-6:00pm (Oct-Mar); 8:00am-7:00pm (Apr-Sep)

While there are over 2,000 graves in St Michael's Catholic Cemetery, a casual stroll through will find many Irish sounding names. Our guide identifies at least 150 Irish that have been buried here over the years.

Columban Plot [Sect 4-II]

This plot contains the remains of four Columban nuns - deeply connected to the Ruttonjee hospital - and two Columban priests all from Ireland that ministered in Hong Kong.



Photography by Rose Conway



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Jesuit Priests [Sect 4-I]

Over 100 Irish Jesuit priests came to Hong Kong. They taught at the Aberdeen Seminary, Wah Yan Colleges, supervised residential halls in HKU and CUHK and contributed to the development of civil society in Hong Kong. At least 20 died and are buried here.

La Salle Brothers [Sect 4-I]

Since 1875 Irish Christian Brothers have been coming to Hong Kong to teach initially in St Joseph's College and subsequently La Salle College (est. 1932). 87 Irish brothers in total made that journey and at least 15 are buried in St Michael's Cemetery.



Hong Kong Police

Many of the Irish that came to Hong Kong joined the Police. Most retired to Ireland and elsewhere but some families remained. Graves connected to the Irish in the HKPF include:

- Keegan, William
- Lysaught Family
- O'Brien Family (Sec. 2)
- O'Sullivan Family
- O'Sullivan, Edmund (Sec. 5-I)
- O'Sullivan, Mortimer



Photography by Rose Conway

Other Irish graves

The Irish were present in all walks of Hong Kong life and some of the other Irish graves that we have identified, include:

- Burke, Rev. Sean Patrick
- Byrne, John Bernard Patrick "Barney"
- Creedon, Timothy
- Dixon Family
- Duggan, Timothy (Sec. 5-I)
- Fallon, Christopher Patrick
- Francis, John Joseph
- Gallagher, Stephen (Sec. 5-I)
- Gray, John Joseph (Sec. 5-IV)
- Holohan, Thomas Francis (V. 3894)
- Mayne, Desmond & Patricia
- Murphy, Daniel
- O'Brien, John (Sec. 5-I)
- O'Toole, Sr. Elizabeth (Sec. 1)
- Riordan, John Joseph (Sec. 5-I)

- Slopes
- Ossuarium Niches
- Stairs
- Toilets

