



Charleston County News Release

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Kilkenny County, Ireland Representatives Visit Charleston to Promote Exhibit at Historic County Courthouse

March 16 event to honor Irish-born architect James Hoban, whose work in Charleston led to his selection as designer for the White House

The public is invited to attend a unique event on Monday, March 16, honoring and opening an exhibit for Irish-born architect James Hoban, designer of the White House,

The event, "Kilkenny to Carolina: The Emigrant Experience of a Single Area of Ireland and its Charleston Connections", will include a series of lectures held on March 16 at the Mills House Hotel (115 Meeting Street, Charleston) followed by the opening of the James Hoban exhibit at 5 p.m. at the Charleston County Historic Courthouse (84 Broad Street, Charleston).

Distinguished guests from Charleston County and Kilkenny County, Ireland will be in Charleston to participate in the opening of the exhibit. The guests from Ireland are Tomas Breathnach, Chairman of Kilkenny County Council, and Joseph Crockett, Kilkenny City and County Manager.

In 1787, Kilkenny-born James Hoban arrived in Charleston, having spent two years in Philadelphia, where he made the acquaintance of many of the prominent South Carolinians who were attending sessions of the Constitutional Convention.

Although still in an unfinished state, the Charleston County Courthouse was visited by President George Washington as he searched for architectural examples he could use as a pattern for the White House. While in Charleston, Washington met James Hoban, who worked as a local builder. Hoban would become the architect of the original White House, built in 1792.

White House architectural historians have theorized that Hoban might have worked on the redesigning the Charleston Statehouse into a Courthouse, which possibly influenced his White House design, noting that "the similarity between the Charleston statehouse and the first design of the White House is too strong to dismiss."

All conference events and activities on March 16 are open to the public and admission is free of charge. For information, contact Stephen J. White, Sr. at (843) 723-3398 or Denis Bergin at (843) 743-5228.

The exhibit at the Charleston County Historic Courthouse will be open from 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday-Friday from March 17-31.

Schedule of events for Monday, March 16:

- **9 a.m.** Assembly and Conference Opening (Stephen J. White Sr., Chairman, Organizing Committee Moderator; Yvonne Evans, City of Charleston Councilmember; Joseph Crockett, Kilkenny City and County Manager)
- **Morning session starts:** Dr. David Gleeson, Associate Professor of History, College of Charleston, and Author of "The Irish in the South 1815-1877"

- **9:30 a.m.** Dr. David Kilroy, Associate Professor of History, Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale FL: From Callan to the Caribbean and the Carolinas: Exploring the transatlantic implications of Cromwell's invasion of Ireland
- **10:05 a.m.** Dr. Colin Bennett, Professor of Mathematics, University of South Carolina: James Wallace S.J. (died 1851), Kilkennyman, Scientist 10.40 Refreshments
- **11:15 a.m.** Dr. Maire Downey, Chairperson, Kilkenny Archaeological Society Good-bye and Good Riddance: Emigrating with Assistance from the Landlord
- **11:50 a.m.** Dr. E. Moore Quinn, Associate Professor of Anthropology, College of Charleston: At Mother's Knee: Stories from a Rathdowney Past, as told in America
- **12:30 p.m.** Visit to St. Mary's Church (1839) and Hall, 89/91 Hassell Street. Informal lunch on the site of the mother-church (1789) of the Carolinas and Georgia, of which James Hoban was a founding member, followed by a presentation and tour of the church and cemetery, led by Al Stiles
- **2 p.m.** Reassemble at the Mills House Hotel
- **Afternoon session starts:** Denis Bergin, Director and Managing Editor, The IRSEUS Project, and Joint Editor, "The Charleston Irish Trail"
- **2:15 p.m.** Nic Butler, Manager, The Charleston Archive: Masons and Musicians: Construction and Culture in Hoban's Charleston
- **2:50 p.m.** Bill Bushong, Staff Historian, White House Historical Association: James Hoban's Progress from Charleston to Washington
- **3:25 p.m.** Brian Fahey, Archivist, Catholic Diocese of Charleston: *The Other 'Bishop Baker': Richard Sullivan Baker (1806-1870)*, Kilkennyman and Vicar General
- **4 p.m.** Stephen J. White Sr., President, Charleston Historical Society, and Director, The Karpeles Museum: It Says in the Papers: The Budds Family of Kilkenny and Charleston
- **5 p.m.** Official opening of the James Hoban Exhibit at the Charleston County Historic Courthouse, 84 Broad Street, Charleston. **Speakers are:**
 - Judge Irvin Condon, President, The James Hoban Society (Moderator)
 - Tomas Breathnach, Chairman, Kilkenny County Council
 - Teddie E. Pryor Sr., Chairman, Charleston County Council
 - William Bushong, White House Historical Association

The March 16 event is being presented by:

- Cities and counties of Charleston and Kilkenny, Ireland
- Ancient Order of Hibernians (Msgr. Manning Division)
- Organizing Committee of the St. Patrick's Day Parade
- S.C. Irish Historical Society
- Kilkenny Archaeological Society
- Charleston Archive at the Charleston County Public Library
- And with the administrative and promotional support of the Irseus Project, and the sponsorship of the consulate General of Ireland (New York).

SIDEBAR: Kilkenny County, Ireland

- Kilkenny County covers just under 800 square miles, with a population of almost 90,000, in the south-central area of Ireland, north of the city of Waterford.
- The county includes the city of Kilkenny, administered by a Borough Council, which celebrates in 2009 the 400th. anniversary of the granting of its charter in 1609.
- The principal towns of Ballyragget, Callan, Castlecomer, Goresbridge, Graignamanagh, Johnstown, Thomastown and Urlingford, and villages such as Ballyhale, Bennettsbridge, Gowran, Inistioge, Knocktopher, Mooncoin and Piltown, are the focal points of an infrastructure that has acquired a reputation for sensitive development and visitor appeal based on its scenic vistas and strong craft tradition.
- In 1966, the Irish government located its national craft development authority in Kilkenny City, thereby creating a movement that has flourished to the present day in a network of studios, workshops and retail outlets throughout the city and county. The county also has an important port facility and industrial complex at Belview in the Waterford Estuary, as

- well as the headquarters of the international Glanbia dairy products group, and the famous Smithwick's brewery.
- Kilkenny's position as Ireland's premier inland destination (it is also the country's second most popular visitor destination, after Dublin) is based on the quality of its historic sites, including Kilkenny Castle, St. Canice's Cathedral, Rothe House and Shee Almshouse in the city itself; impressive medieval church remains at Graignamanagh, Kells and Thomastown, and natural features such as the Dunmore Caves and the scenic delights of the Nore, Barrow and Suir river valleys.
 - Kilkenny Arts Festival (August) is regarded as one of Ireland, and Europe's, most innovative cultural events.

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