

# Irish and Greek American Heritage Month Booklist March 2012



America's cultural patchwork quilt includes people from many European cultures. March honors Irish Americans and Greek Americans. Congress and the president proclaimed March as Irish-American Heritage Month in 1991 to honor contributions and achievements of Irish Americans. The Irish national holiday celebrates Ireland's patron St. Patrick on March 17. Similarly, the contributions of Greek Americans are honored this month because Greek Independence Day is March 25.

The following is a selected list of resources that will help you learn more about Irish- and Greek-American history and ancestry. This year is the anniversary of the start of the War of 1812 and is a leap year, as remembered in a pair of titles below. All books are available at the Norfolk Public Library and genealogical online resources may be viewed at any of the public computer stations located in the library, and other databases may be viewed from home or in any library. Also, The Sargeant Memorial Collection has materials on Irish and Greek genealogy.

For more reading or viewing recommendations or research assistance, ask at any branch library.

# **FICTION**

The following is a selected list of recent fiction books that provide an insight into the Irish American and Greek American experience in the United States through literature and storytelling.

#### The Ghosts of Belfast

(Stuart Neville) Fegan has been a "hard man," an IRA killer in Northern Ireland. Now that peace has come, he is being haunted day and night by twelve ghosts: a mother and infant, a schoolboy, a butcher, an RUC constable, and seven other of his innocent victims. In order to appease them, he's going to have to kill the men who gave him orders. As he's working his way down the list he encounters a woman who may offer him redemption; she has borne a child to an RUC officer and is an outsider too. Now he has given Fate—and his quarry—a hostage. Is this Fegan's ultimate mistake?



#### The Guards: A Novel

(Ken Bruen) There's something about the job that leads (fictional) cops and PIs to drink, which is why booze always seems to be a minor character in the genre. This is certainly the case in Ken Bruen's debut thriller about melancholy Irishman Jack Taylor, whose luck at finding things keeps him in beer money after he's kicked out of Ireland's Garda Siochna. When the mother of a young suicide victim asks him to investigate her daughter's death, Taylor discovers that Sarah Henderson isn't the only teenager to take a long walk off a short Galway pier. His search for the perpetrator gets his best friend killed, destroys his nascent relationship with his client, and sets him up for a final betrayal few readers will see coming.

#### **Brooklyn: A Novel**

(Colm Tóibín) Eilis Lacey has come of age in small-town Ireland in the hard years following World War Two. When an Irish priest from Brooklyn offers to sponsor Eilis in America, she decides she must go, leaving her fragile mother and her charismatic sister behind. Eilis finds work in a department store on Fulton Street, and when she least expects it, finds love. Tony, who loves the Dodgers and his big Italian family, slowly wins her over with patient charm. But just as Eilis begins to fall in love, devastating news from Ireland threatens the promise of her future.



#### Metropolis

(Elizabeth Gaffney) On a freezing night in the middle of a New York winter, a young immigrant is suddenly awakened by a fire in P. T. Barnum's stable, where he works and sleeps, and soon finds himself at the center of a citywide arson investigation. Determined to clear his name and realize the dreams that inspired his hazardous voyage to America, he will change his identity many times, find himself mixed up with one of the city's toughest and most enterprising gangs, and fall in love with a smart, headstrong, and beautiful woman. Buffeted by the forces of fate, hate, luck, and passion, our hero struggles to build a life—and just to stay alive—on an epic journey that is at once unique and poignantly emblematic of the American experience.

#### Middlesex

(*Jeffrey Eugenides*) Pulitzer Prize-winning story of Calliope Stephanides and three generations of the Greek-American Stephanides family who travel from a tiny village overlooking Mount Olympus in Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit, witnessing its glory days as the Motor City, and the race riots of 1967, before they move out to the tree-lined streets of suburban Grosse Pointe, Michigan. To understand why Calliope is not like other girls, she has to uncover a guilty family secret and the astonishing genetic history that turns Callie into Cal, one of the most audacious and wondrous narrators in contemporary fiction.

#### **Paradise Alley**

(*Kevin Baker*) *Paradise Alley* concerns a tumultuous moment in the record of the Civil War: the 1863 New York riots that followed President Lincoln's decision to create a draft. Baker refers to the street violence as one of the worst instances of civic unrest in American history. Yet one can not tell a compelling story with simple pronouncements. Baker gives us a handful of characters--fictional, yet emblematic-who lead readers through the dense weave of class, race, ambition, gender politics, and violence in mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century America. Told through the eyes of the Irish immigrants who lived through the draft riots, *Paradise Alley* is a novel you will never forget.

#### Tales from a Greek Island

(Alexandros Papadiamantis) Set on the author's native Aegean island of Skiathos, these twelve stories capture the folkways of Greece. With acute observation of daily activities and loving descriptions of land and sea, Papadiamantis portrays the beauty and harshness of traditional island life. His prose captivates a reader with its rich combination of realism and symbolism, sensuality and mysticism, insularity and universality. Written near the turn of the century, these works speak today in ways both remarkable and familiar.

#### Who Occupies this House: a Novel

(*Kathleen Hill*) A finely wrought novel tells the story of four generations of an Irish-American family that has lived in the same house for almost a century. The story of the house in which these Irish immigrants come to call themselves Americans speaks to the larger history of the country itself.



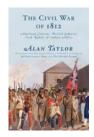
#### The Island

(*Victoria Hislop*) Alexis Fielding longs to find out about her mothers past. When she decides to visit her mother's native Crete, she discovers her great-grandmother and a family rent by tragedy, war, and a secrecy that holds them all in its powerful grip.

# **NONFICTION**

The following is a selected list of recent nonfiction books that provide a glimpse into the Irish American and Greek American experience in the United States.

The Civil War of 1812: American Citizens, British Subjects, Irish Rebels, and Indian Allies (*Alan Taylor*) In this deeply researched and clearly written book, the Pulitzer Prize winning historian Alan Taylor tells the riveting story of a war that redefined North America. During the early nineteenth century, Britons and Americans renewed their struggle over the legacy of the American Revolution.



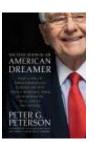
#### **Confessions of an Irish Rebel**

(Brendan Behan) Behan was an Irish author noted for his powerful political views and earthy satire. While not in jail or in pubs, Behan worked in odd jobs and wrote plays and stories that colorfully depicted the life of the ordinary working men. Several of his books were banned in Ireland. Behan spent most of the years from 1939 to 1946 in English and Irish penal institutions on political charges. However, his writings are lively, full of humor, and do not show much signs of anger or bitterness toward the world at large.



#### The Education of an American Dreamer

(*Peter G. Peterson*) The financier recounts his life story, describing his childhood working in his father's Greek diner in Kearney, Nebraska, his advertising days, his role as Secretary of Commerce under Richard Nixon, and his founding of the financial company.



## **Greek Revival: Cooking for Life**

(*Patricia Moore-Pastides*) Includes many healthy dishes of the Mediterranean. Throughout the book Moore-Pastides shares lively stories of her days living in Greece and Cyprus that exemplify the enduring charm of an Old World lifestyle.



#### Green Suede Shoes: An Irish-American Odyssey

(Larry Kirwan) This rock 'n' roll Angela's Ashes begins in County Wexford, Ireland, in the late 1950s, as Kirwan finds himself side by side with the Ramones and Blondie at CBGBs; the brothers McCourt, Lester Bangs, and Nick Tosches at The Bells of Hell; the Guinness soaked regulars of Paddy Reilly's; Cyndi Lauper while she ascends and burns; Joe Strummer, Rick Ocasek, Neil Young, and Shane McGowan.

# How the Irish saved Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe

(*Thomas Cahill*) A lively popular historical account of the pivotal role played by Irish monks in transcribing and preserving Classical civilization during the Middle Ages while libraries on the continent were lost and how the vibrant cultural influence of Ireland was replanted in Europe and influencing Western culture forever.

#### **Ireland: A History**

(*Thomas Bartlett*) One of the country's leading historians writes a fascinating new history that ranges from prehistory to the present.

#### The Irish Americans: A History

(*Jay P. Dolan*) A celebratory history of the Irish in America from the eighteenth century to the present, by one of the nation's most eminent scholars of the immigrant experience. This popular history is accessible to adults and teens.

#### Irish Cooking: Over 70 Deliciously Authentic Irish Recipes

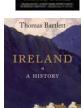
(Biddy White-Lennon & Georgina Campbell) More than 90 delicious step-by-step recipes that capture the essence of Irish cooking.

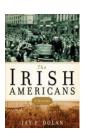
#### **Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman in America**

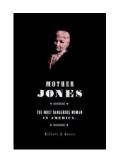
(Elliott J. Gorn) Her rallying cry was famous: "Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living." A century ago, Mother Jones was a celebrated organizer and agitator, the very soul of the modern American labor movement. In this first biography of "the most dangerous woman in America," Elliott J. Gorn proves why, in the words of Eugene V. Debs, Mother Jones "has won her way into the hearts of the nation's toilers, and . . . will be lovingly remembered by their children and their children's children forever."

#### North of Ithaca: A Journey Home through a Family's Extraordinary Past

(*Eleni N. Gage*) Eleni Gage was determined to come to terms with her family's tragic history. Along the way, she learned to dodge bad omens, battle scorpions on her pillow, and the shadows in her heart. She also came to understand that Greece and its memories were not only dark and death-filled, and that memories of the dead can bring new life to the present and hope to the future.







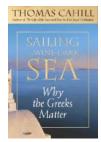
#### The Olive and the Caper: Adventures in Greek Cooking

(Susanna Hofman and Victoria Wise) Traditional Greek cuisine favors sour tastes: lemons, capers, vinegar, and wild herbs. Cooking with these pungent ingredients takes a sure hand or, failing that, a good recipe. Hoffman's book supplies the latter in abundance; it attempts nothing less than to capture the whole of Greek food culture between covers. That includes side notes on language, myth, literature and botany; details of regional specialties; lists of native greens; and an explanation of why we say "Greek" instead of "Hellenic."



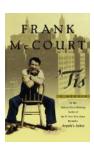
#### Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: Why the Greeks Matter

(*Thomas Cahill*) In the city-states of Athens and Sparta and throughout the Greek islands, honors could be won in making love and war, and lives were rife with contradictions. By developing the alphabet, the Greeks empowered the reader, demystified experience, and opened the way for civil discussion and experimentation.



#### 'Tis: A Memoir

(Frank McCourt) A follow-up to his Pulitzer Prize-winning memoir, Angela's Ashes, McCourt is first guided by an Irish bartender who tells him to go to the New York Public Library and read Samuel Johnson. Thus assimilated, he becomes a supply clerk for the army, then a warehouse laborer, before earning a college degree at NYU (without a high school diploma) and settling down as a teacher at a rowdy vocational high school in Staten Island.



#### **Tracing Your Irish Family History**

(Anthony Adolph) An all-in-one guide to tracing one's Irish family history through including county archives and libraries, local publications, tax rolls, censuses, religious and civil registers, court and military books, as well as many other more obscure records.

# Where to Find Your Arab-American or Jewish Genealogy Records: Also: Mediterranean, Assyrian, Iranian, Greek & Armenian

(Anne Hart) A look at how and where to find Greek and other Mediterranean genealogy records.

# **JUVENILE AND YOUNG ADULT**

The following is a selected list of recent fiction and nonfiction books that provide an insight into the Irish American and Greek American experience in the United States through literature and storytelling.

## **Ancient Greece: An Interactive History Adventure**

(William Caper) Describes the life and times of ancient Greece. The readers' choices reveal the historical details of life from the perspectives of a resident of Athens and a resident of Sparta.



#### **Artemis Fowl**

(Eoin Colfer) Twelve year old Artemis Fowl is not your typical Irish kid. He is the most ingenious criminal mastermind in history. With two trusty sidekicks in tow, he hatches a cunning plot to divest the fairy folk of their pot of gold. Of course, he isn't foolish enough to believe in all that "gold at the end of the rainbow"

nonsense. Rather, he knows that the only way to separate the little people from their stash is to kidnap one of them and wait for the ransom to arrive. But when the time comes to put his plan into action, he doesn't count on the appearance of the extra small, pointy-eared Captain Holly Short of the LEPrecon (Lower Elements Police Reconnaissance) Unit. Fantastic stuff from beginning to end, the Artemis Fowl series is a rip-roaring, 21st-century romp of the highest order.



#### The Banshee

(Eve Bunting and Emily Arnold McCully) When Terry awakes in the middle of the night to the sound of wailing in the backyard, he decides it must be the banshee, the ghostly figure of Irish legend who wails when death is near. How Terry confronts the banshee--and discovers what she really is--makes for a pleasingly scary story that's perfect for Halloween, or any time of year.



#### The Cooking of Greece

(Matthew Locricchio) Mouthwatering, close-up color photos make this book a visual feast for chefs grade 5 and up.

#### Girl to the Core (YA)

(Stacey Goldblatt) Fifteen-year-old Molly gains support from her extended Irish American family and enlightenment in Girl Corps philosophy and activities as she deals with a cheating boyfriend and overbearing best friend.

#### **Hush: An Irish Princess' Tale (YA)**

(Donna Jo Napoli) In this historical novel set in the Middle Ages fifteen-year-old Melkorka, an Irish princess, is kidnapped by Russian slave traders and not only learns how to survive but to challenge some of the brutality of her captors, who are fascinated by her apparent muteness and the possibility that she is enchanted.

#### I Have an Olive Tree

(Eve Bunting; illustrated by Karen Barbour)

After her grandfather's death, eight-year-old Sophia fulfills his last request and journeys to Greece with her mother to see the land where her roots are.

#### Irish Immigrants, 1840-1920

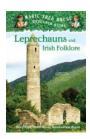
(Megan O'Hara) Discusses the reasons Irish people left their homeland to come to America, the experiences immigrants had in the new country, and the contributions this cultural group made to American society.

#### **Leprechaun in Late Winter**

(Mary Pope Osborne and Natalie Pope Boyce) Jack and Annie travel back to nineteenth-century Ireland to inspire a young Augusta Gregory to share her love of Irish legends and folktales with the world.

# Leprechauns and Irish Folklore: A Nonfiction Companion to Leprechaun in Late Winter

Join Jack and Annie as they research leprechauns and Irish folklore and find out the facts behind the fiction.



#### **Nobody's Prize (YA)**

(Esther Friesner) Still longing for adventure, Princess Helen of Sparta maintains her disguise as a boy to join her unsuspecting brothers as part of the crew of the Argo, the ship commanded by Prince Jason in his quest for the Golden Fleece. Helen's determination to choose her own future will resonate with modern teens, who will also appreciate her resourcefulness and determination to help those who help her. A solid choice for fans of Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson and the Olympians books

### The Odyssey: A Graphic Novel

(*Gareth Hinds*) Retells, in graphic novel format, Homer's epic tale of Odysseus, the ancient Greek hero who encounters witches and other obstacles on his journey home after fighting in the Trojan War.

# **Torchlight**

(*Carol Otis Hurst*) Charlotte was a Yankee and Maggie was Irish. In 1850s Westfield, their budding friendship was a problem. As tensions between the two communities rose, rumors began to fly, and fists soon followed. Author Carol Otis Hurst captures this volatile time in American history through the unlikely friendship between two girls from opposing sides, revealing the cultural and religious prejudice that threatened to erupt into violence and overwhelm New England communities on the eve of the Civil War.

# **DVD**

The following is a selected list of recent videos with a Greek or Irish flavor.

#### **Gangs of New York**

In 1846, waves of Irish immigrants poured into the New York neighborhood of Five Points. "Billy the Butcher" bands his fellow "Native Americans" into a gang to take on the Irish gang "The Dead Rabbits," organized by Priest Vallon. After a bloody clash Vallon is dead and his son ends up in a brutal reform school. In 1862, that boy returns to seek vengeance against the man that killed his father. Rated R



## The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization

Recounts the rise, glory, demise and legacy of the Greek empire, the astonishing civilization which marked the dawn of Western culture.

#### Leap Year

Inspired by an Irish tradition that allows women to propose to men on Leap Day, Anna follows Jeremy to Dublin to propose to him. But after landing on the wrong side of Ireland, she must enlist the help of Declan, a handsome and carefree local man, to get her across the country. Along the way, they discover that the road to love can take you to very unexpected places. Rated PG.



#### Mamma Mia!

By reading her mother's diary, Twenty-year-old Sophie discovers that she has three possible fathers, so she secretly invites all three men to her Greek island wedding in a desperate bid to discover which of them is her father. But not all goes according to plan. Now, old loves are rekindled, new loves are formed, and Sophie risks everything to discover the true identity of her father. Rated PG-13.

#### **Michael Collins**

Michael Collins is the biography of the charismatic and controversial Irish rebel leader who led the fight for independence from Britain. Among the most beautiful and atmospherically photographed movies of the '90s, Michael Collins is also a rich and intelligent study of the nature of politics and leadership: the IRA spokesman, full of fiery convictions, eventually gives way to the more mature negotiator who strives to reach a compromise solution and is politically undone in the process. Liam Neeson gives a grand and towering performance as Collins, but for all the character's legendary, heroic, or otherwise larger-than-life attributes, Jordan and Neeson also keep him human. Rated R



#### My Big Fat Greek Wedding

Toula is a quiet, devoted daughter in a big, crazy Greek family. Working in her father's restaurant, she hides behind her family and keeps the world at a distance. One day at the restaurant she finds herself pouring coffee for a man who inspires her to change her life and the way she sees the world forever. Rated PG.

# Out of Ireland: The Story of Irish Emigration to America.

Examines the history of the seven million Irish who immigrated to America in the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries including the causes of the exodus and the immigrant experience in the United States.

#### Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief.

Percy Jackson is no ordinary teenager; he's the son of Poseidon and is accused of stealing Zeus' lightning bolt. In a modern twist on a mythological tale, Percy embarks on an incredible cross-country journey to prove his innocence, recover the bolt, and prevent a war among the gods that could destroy the world. Based on *The Lightning Thief*, the first book in the bestselling series Percy Jackson & the Olympians by Rick Riordan. Rated PG.



# **WEBSITES**

The following are a few websites on Greek and Irish genealogy and culture.

#### D'Addezio

www.daddezio.com/grekgen.html

Greek genealogy Home Page containing valuable links to articles, research, vital records and many more references to guide Greek Americans in genealogical quests.

## **Embassy of the Hellenic Republic**

http://www.mfa.gr/usa/en/

The Greek Embassy's website includes information on Greek-American relations and the Greek Diaspora.

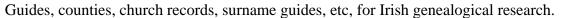
## **Embassy of Ireland**

http://www.embassyofireland.org/

The Irish Embassy's website includes information about Ireland and Irish Government support for Irish communities abroad including tracing one's Irish roots.

#### Fianna Guide to Irish Genealogy

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~fianna/





#### **National Archives and Records Administration**

http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/topics/calendar/

Use this website to search for original documents, photographs, and other records related to heritage months, holidays, and awareness days in the online Archival Research Catalog (ARC) at the US National Archives and Records Administration.

# **ONLINE DATABASES**

Databases are subscription resources that contain reliable, timely, and authoritative online sources of information. Links to these are found on the Library's Webpage at <a href="https://www.npl.lib.va.us">www.npl.lib.va.us</a> under *Databases*. Use your Norfolk Public Library card number for access to the following resources at home or in the library.

#### **Ancestry Library Edition**



More than 1.5 billion names in over 4,000 databases, this genealogical resource includes records from a wide variety of sources. [Only available inside the library.]

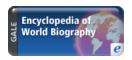
#### **Biography In Context**

Includes full-text articles from hundreds of periodicals. A gender-searchable resource based on one or more personal facts such as birth and death year, nationality, ethnicity, occupation or combine criteria to create a highly-targeted custom search.



## **Encyclopedia of World Biography**

Approximately 7,000 biographies on notables from every part of the world and from all time periods. Includes thousands of photos, a consolidated index, and more.



#### **World Book Online Reference Center**

Containing every article from the 22-volume print set plus thousands more. This database has state-of-the-art multimedia, maps, editor-reviewed Web sites, and more.



