

Celtic Connections Conference 2018 Report

What do you get when you combine 315 individuals interested in their Irish/Scots-Irish/Scottish/Welsh ancestry with thirteen exceptional genealogists from Ireland, Scotland, England and the United States?

Pick the most correct answer:

- a) The 2018 Celtic Connections “Pathways to our Past” Conference held August 10-11 at the Boston Marriott-Newton
- b) Conference participants coming from 29 U.S. states (including Hawaii) plus Canada
- c) Survey responses indicating a high degree of satisfaction for the presenters, entertainment, and overall conference experience
- d) Lots of learning, camaraderie, and fun
- e) All of the above

The clear answer is “e. All of the above.”

Six internationally-renowned presenters (Audrey Collins, Bruce Durie, Fiona Fitzsimons, Maurice Gleeson, John Grenham, and Christine Woodcock) flew across the Atlantic to share their wealth of knowledge. The array of speakers also included seven highly-experienced U.S. genealogists (Kyle Betit, Marie E. Daly, Nora Galvin, Pamela Guye Holland, Donna Moughty, David E. Rencher, and John Schnelle), making it a serious challenge for conference attendees to choose among the four tracks of presentations. In their post-conference surveys, participants gave high marks and frequently used the terms “Excellent” or “Wonderful” to describe their conference experience. The DNA sessions were particularly popular.

A full busload from the conference enjoyed the Thursday trip to the historic Lowell mill and vicinity. Music and story-telling during the banquet and lunches brought out cultural aspects of family history.

The 2018 conference was the third biennial gathering sponsored jointly by The Irish Ancestral Research Association (TIARA) and the Irish Genealogical Society International (IGSI). All three conferences have received rave reviews. The 2020 Celtic Connections Conference is scheduled for July 31-August 1, 2020, with the exact Midwest location yet to be determined. Watch the conference website for details: <http://celtic-connections.org/>.