



The wheel of the USS Jamestown is part of the permanent collection at Forbes House Museum. It was given to Captain Robert Bennet Forbes for his contribution to the 1847 humanitarian voyage to Ireland during the height of the Great Famine. Forbes has the distinction of being the only civilian captain to lead a US naval ship, since use of the USS Jamestown was granted through congressional petition. Tons of food were collected by civic and church groups throughout New England and loaded onto the ship by Boston residents.

23 April 2012

CHARITABLE IRISH & EIRE SOCIETIES TO PARTNER WITH FORBES HOUSE MUSEUM FOR FAMINE COMMEMORATION ON 6 MAY, 2-5PM.

By Dr. Catherine B. Shannon, Professor Emerita, Westfield State University

The Charitable Irish Society, the Eire Society and the Forbes House Museum will jointly sponsor an Irish Famine Commemoration program on Sunday, 6 May from 2 to 5pm. The program will feature presentations that highlight significant efforts of two New Englanders to provide aid, comfort and food to Ireland in the darkest years of the Irish Famine.

The program will begin at 2pm at Fontbonne Academy, 303 Adams Street, Milton, with presentations by Professor Maureen Murphy of Hofstra University and Professor Emerita

Catherine B. Shannon of Westfield State University. Murphy, a noted expert on the Irish Famine, will describe the work of Vermont native Asneath Nicholson, who provided aid and comfort to the sick, destitute and starving in Ireland from 1844 to 1849. Shannon will describe the work of Captain Robert Bennet Forbes and the New England Relief Committee, who delivered crucial food to County Cork on the USS Jamestown in the spring of 1847.

A wine and cheese reception at Forbes House Museum will immediately follow the presentations beginning at 3:30pm. Local Irish musicians will provide entertainment and guests will be treated to special tours of the Museum. The tours will focus on the history of Captain Forbes' historic 1847 voyage and include an exhibition of various artifacts related to the humanitarian effort.

Pre registration is required. Call the Charitable Irish Society at 617- 330-1737 or e-mail them at charitableirishsociety@gmail.com, or call Barbara Fitzgerald of the Eire Society at 617 698-8758 or e- mail her at barbara.s.fitzgerald@gmail.com. Tickets are \$15 per person. Reservations deadline is 1 May.

The event is part of the 2012 Annual Irish Famine Commemoration which encompasses a year long program of commemoration. Boston has been designated by the Irish government as the official site for overseas events.

On Saturday, 5 May 2012 President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins will visit Boston. He will give a presentation on the impact of the Famine at Faneuil Hall at 11:15am, followed by a wreath laying ceremony the Boston Irish Famine Memorial at the corner of School and Washington Streets. A reception with President Higgins will take place that same day at the Seaport World Trade Center beginning at 1:30pm.

For more information on President Higgins' visit, contact the Consulate General of Ireland in Boston at 617- 267- 9330, ext. 13 or e-mail bostoncongen@dfa.ie.

For more information on the Irish Famine Commemoration program at Forbes House Museum call 617- 696- 1815 or e-mail info@forbeshousemuseum.org. For more information on Museum programs, special events and group tours, visit the website www.forbeshousemuseum.org.