

Meet Gary and Joanne - our very own Lord and Lady of Athlone Manor!

Gary and Joanne Reamey, an American/Canadian couple, may not be too well known among the general population of Athlone but they can lay claim to having a very unique connection to the place.

In 2019, as a birthday gift to Joanne, Gary purchased a title through Manorial Auctioneers based in London, namely the Lordship of the Manor of Athlone. Since the acquisition of the title, Gary and Joanne are entitled to call themselves the Lord and Lady of the Manor of Athlone.

Neither of them have specific family or generational ties to Athlone but Joanne's Irish heritage - she has Cork roots - played its part in this intriguing story.

Gary explains: "My wife's family left Ireland in 1825 for Canada. That year, her great great grandfather Florence Driscoll and his family were on the Resolution, a ship that was part of the Peter Robinson group of nine ships that left Cork and came to Canada.

"As a birthday gift to Joanne that would tie to her Irish heritage and as her family approaches their 200 year anniversary in Canada, I acquired the Lordship. There is also a high probability that her great, great great grandfather was stationed at Athlone Castle during his military days." Gary also noted that the Earl of Athlone was Governor General to Canada during World War II.

The acquisition of such

titles can be an intensive process and to ensure all was in order before purchasing the Lordship title, Gary hired a solicitor to review the relevant documents.

Gary directed the Athlone Topic to an Irish Times newspaper article in 1996 on the matter of purchasing such titles and some of them can fetch a tidy sum. For example, two Lords of the Manor titles, relating to the baronies of Askeaton in Limerick and Granard in Longford, carried estimates of £22,000 to £26,000 each at an auction being held that year by

Manorial Auctioneers. Another title, that of the Lord of Ratra in Roscommon, was expected to fetch in the region of £6,000 at the same auction.

Gary, whose surname has roots in Armagh, the UK and France, readily admits that he is 'not big on titles but big on history' and is very proud of the Athlone connection.

"We consider it a privilege and honour to be associated with the town of Athlone in some small way. The titles are simply a small representation of the great history of your town," said Gary. "The his-

tory of Athlone and County Westmeath are an important part of the history of Ireland. The more I research, the more I am amazed with your history.

"We have spent many hours researching the great history of Athlone and County Westmeath. I have been in touch with authors and historical societies in the area. I have communicated with one of your great authors Donal O'Brien. John at Left Bank Antiques is currently getting me some books on Athlone and I made a purchase of an antique silverware set in his shop last September. And who could resist a pint in Sean's Bar!" said Gary.

Regarding the title itself, there is no physical real estate associated with the Lordship but Gary says he may do further research to establish if there are any other associated "manor rights."

Gary and Joanne's interest in the history of Athlone is not just contained inside the covers of books. Both have actually visited the town as recently as September 2019 and hope to make another trip next year if possible.

"We did a two week tour of Ireland and made sure we spent time in Athlone. We were planning on going this September, but couldn't because of the pandemic. We plan to visit next August. We will also promote Athlone and County Westmeath on this side of the pond. You never know, we may even have a Lordship of Athlone blend of Kilbeggan whiskey someday!"

The Reameys have also



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supported a number of charities in Athlone and in the county, including Midland Samaritans and Midlands Pieta House and say they will continue to do so.

Their passion for Athlone history stoked by the Lordship title has kept them busy but they appear to lead a very hectic life as it is. Gary has more than 40 years of executive management experience and had a thirty five year career with financial industry securities firm, Edward Jones.

Both he and Joanne now own and run a very suc-

cessful music publishing company in Nashville, Tennessee. The company's team of songwriters have had twelve Number 1 country music hits to their credit with many songs recorded by artists such as Kenny Rogers and Hank Williams Jr.

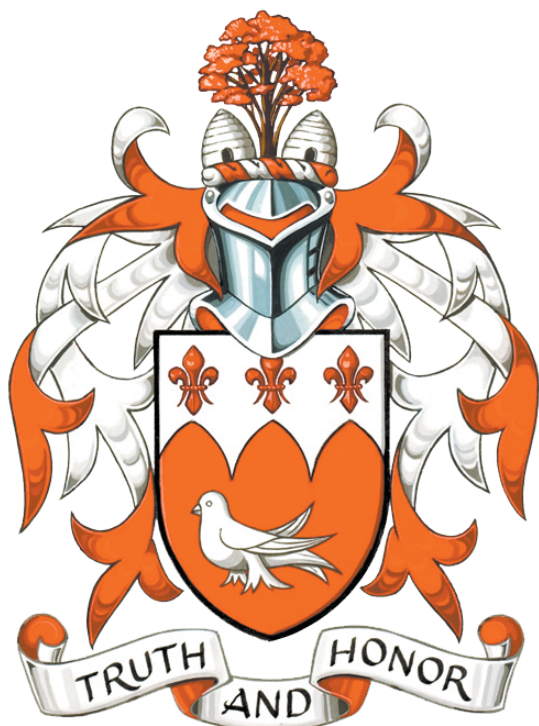
Gary is a US and Canadian citizen while Joanne is a Canadian citizen and will soon also acquire US citizenship. They spend the summers in Peterborough in Canada and the winters in Naples, Florida.

Amid all of these very

busy commitments, they have also reared a family of five children, four boys and one girl and have four grandchildren.

So, if you didn't know anything about the fascinating world of the Lord and Lady of the Manor of Athlone, you do now!

If you want to read more about Gary and Joanne Reamey, you can go to their website, <https://lordship-athlone-manor.com> where you can find plenty of fascinating detail about the Lordship title and their heritage.



The Reamey coat of arms which Gary has adopted as the Athlone Lordship coat of arms.



Lord of the Manor of Athlone, Gary D. Reamey.



Gary and Joanne holding their granddaughter Wendy, who is 6 months old.



Lady of the Manor of Athlone, Joanne A. Driscoll Reamey.