



Fenit - Saint Brendan the Navigator

The Fenit skyline is marked by the towering St. Brendan commemorative statue, located on the peak of Great Samphire Rock.

St. Brendan is thought to have discovered America 1000 years before Columbus.

The statue depicts a St. Brendan leaning into a force 10 storm, cloak blown aback, facing the Atlantic pointing in the direction of America.¹

This dramatic sculpture was created by artist Tighe O'Donoghue and inspired by Fr. Gearoid O'Donnchadha.

¹Data source: Lewis, Frank, 'In the Footsteps of St. Brendan' May 8, 2007. Accessed at: www.saint-Brendan.org/images/gallery/092511aslibhreanainn.htm

St. Brendan's Cloak & the 100 Gods



The sculptor Tighe O'Donoghue depicted the heads of 100 Gods around the hem and cloak, a likeness to the stone carved heads depicted on the doorway to Clonfert Monastery founded by St. Brendan.

Reading all of them like the beads of the rosary is thought to bring good luck.

Data source: St. Brendan The Navigator Sculpture – Fr Gearoid and Tighe O'Donoghue – Video - Raspberry Juice Productions. Accessed at:

<https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=mcafee&p=youtube+st+brendans+status+fenit#id=9&vid=dee578447e40cf11533d6ccc3045963e&action=view>



Saint Brendan the Navigator

Born 484 AD on Fenit Island

Baptised at Tobar na Molt (Weathers' Well)
in the parish of Ardfert

From the Altraighe clan a sept of the Ciarrai from
where Kerry gets its name

Ordained in 510 AD at Tearmon Eirc, Lerrig

Died in 577 AD at age 94 years

Buried in Clonfert, County Galway

Feast Day is celebrated on the 16th May

Patron Saint of Sailors, Fishermen, Travelers,
Whales, Elderly Adventurers, and the US Navy.

Data sources:

Holy Wells of Cork & Kerry.com https://eoceanic.com/sailing/harbours/212/fenit_harbour

Lewis, Frank, 'In the Footsteps of St. Brendan' May 8, 2007. Accessed at: www.saint-brendan.org/images/gallery/092511aslibhreanainn.htm



Christopher Columbus - Inspired by St. Brendan

In Latin prose 'Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis' written sometime between the mid-8th and early 10th century, Saint Brendan is immortalized as a sea adventurer. According to the Navigatio he makes an astonishing Atlantic journey with other monks to the "Promised Land of the Saints."

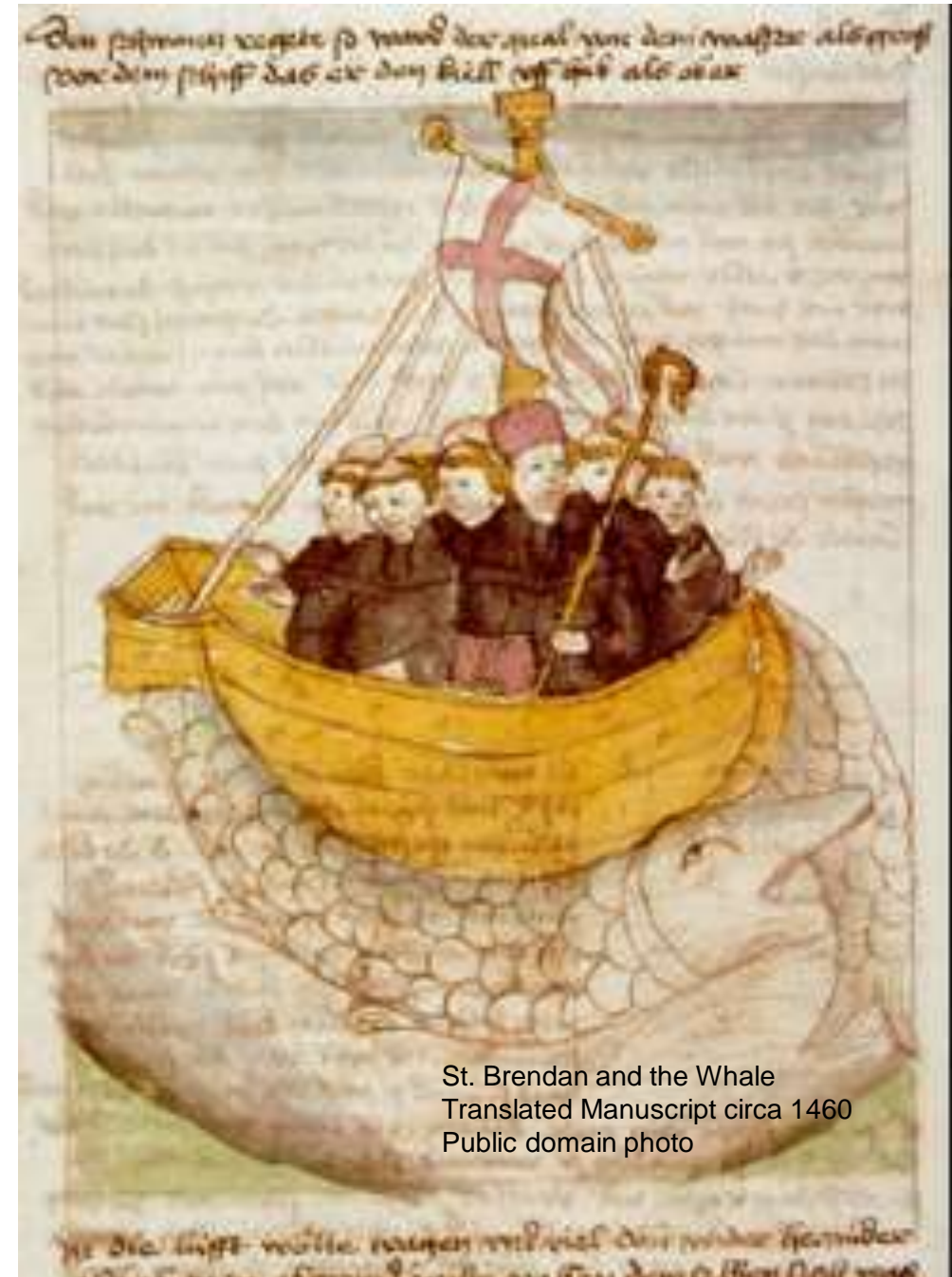
Christopher Columbus attended the University of Pavia where he read of Saint Brendan's travels in a copy of the Navigatio that he found in the monastery library. This prompted Columbus to visit Galway and enlist the help of an Irish navigator. Subsequently, in 1492, when Columbus embarked on his trans-Atlantic voyage he is quoted as saying -

'I go to seek the promised land of Saint Brendan'

Data Sources:

[St. Brendan Celtic Abbot, Encyclopaedia Britannica https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Brendan#ref281463](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Brendan#ref281463)

[The Kerryman, Our Voyage of Discovery \(08/05/2013\) https://www.pressreader.com/ireland/the-kerryman-north-kerry/20130508/282187943528964](https://www.pressreader.com/ireland/the-kerryman-north-kerry/20130508/282187943528964)



St. Brendan and the Whale
Translated Manuscript circa 1460
Public domain photo

St. Brendan Voyage Stained Glass Window

The St. Brendan's voyage is commemorated by a beautiful stained glass window above the interior main door of Fenit Church. This beautiful illustration was created by artist Tighe O'Donoghue who also created the St. Brendan sculpture at the Heritage Park at the end of the Fenit pier. This and other stained glass windows adorn the village church.



Sli Bhreanainn Heritage Trail (The Brendan Way)

Sli Bhreanainn stretches from Fenit to Lerrig Cross in Ardfert. There are seven stations each with significance to Saint Brendan's life.

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| 1. Samphire Rock Monument | Honouring the voyages of Saint Brendan |
| 2. Fenit Island | Birthplace of Saint Brendan in 484AD |
| 3. Cill Mhor Kilfenora | 520AD church Saint Brendan is thought to have founded |
| 4. Cathair Airde | Hill Fort where the Chief Prophet of Ireland purportedly heralded Brendan imminent birth and forecasted his future importance. |
| 5. Ardfert Cathedral | Site of a monastery founded by Saint Brendan |
| 6. Tobar na Molt | Weathers' Well Near Ardfert where Saint Brendan was baptized |
| 7. Tearmon Eirc, Lerrig | Where Saint Brendan was ordained in 510 AD |

Data source: In the Footsteps of St. Brendan

<http://www.saint-brendan.org/images/image/gallery/092511a1slibhreanainn.htm>



Ná Fág Ach Lorg Coise

Leave Only Your Footprints

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Photos and art by Trisha unless otherwise cited

