

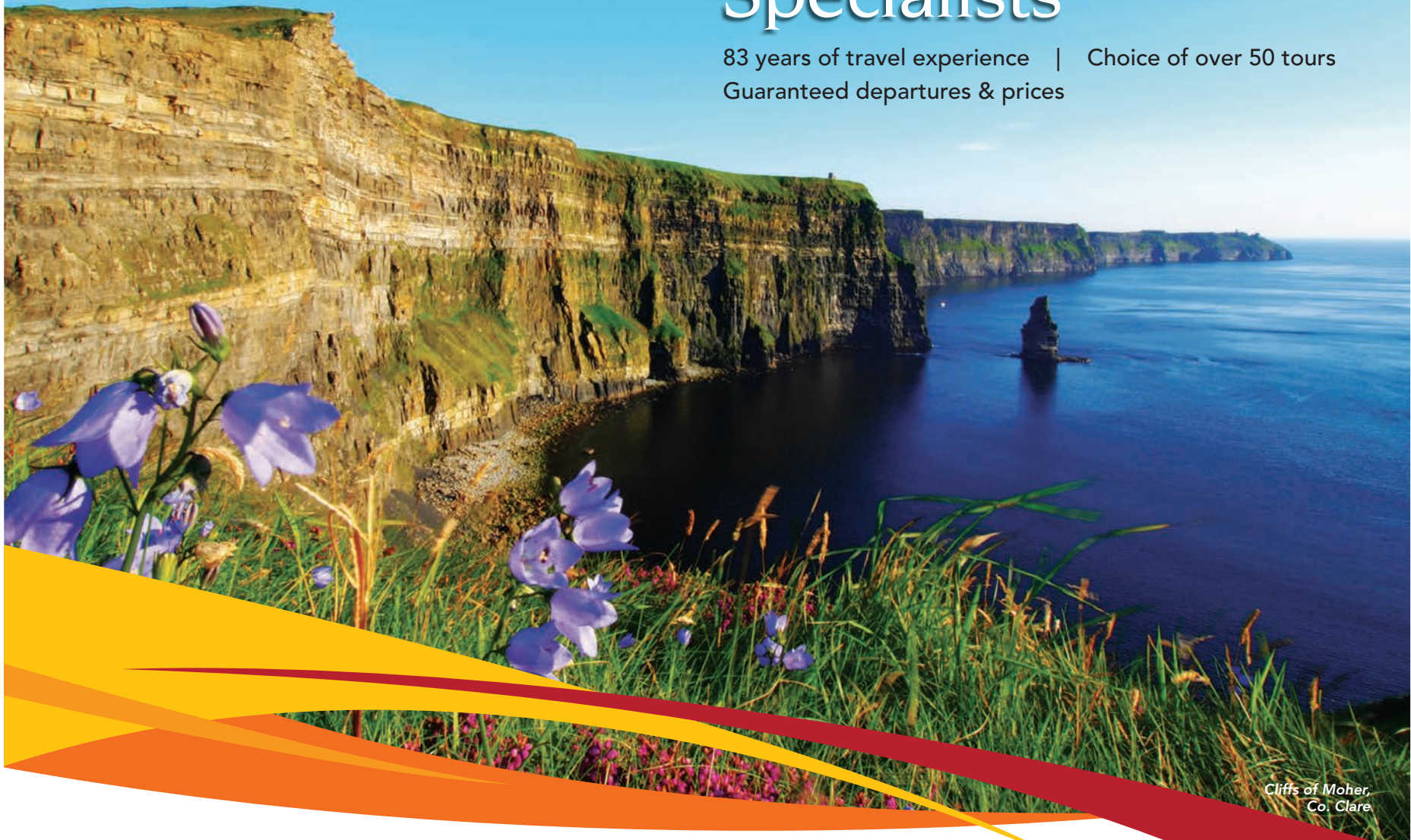


*Wedding
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From the Motherland

By Sean Farrell



of Dunkirk spirit obtained in which the public, by and large, put up and shut up. People did not take to the streets. However,

once the Troika departed, it was end of honeymoon and back to the kitchen sink.

While national bankruptcy had been averted, the country's finances repaired, and "core" welfare benefits preserved, aspects of the cutbacks, and the scattergun approach to economising, particularly in the small print of measures taken, proved toxic. Cuts yielding little in savings emasculated many small services and programmes which helped the sick, disadvantaged and politically powerless. The monies could have been saved elsewhere by targeting some of those "core" heavy hitters through, e.g. means testing child benefit or even slightly raising income tax and blaming the Troika. It might have worked, though try explaining that to people losing out on a carer or a respite or other grant. The resulting drip feed of public disillusionment and simmering anger was not perceived officially at the time.

This was compounded by a succession of tactical and strategic blunders by the Government during 2014, culminating in the fiasco over Irish Water, an issue that rumbled on throughout the year before coming to a head in November. The blunders had a cumulative effect. Just about every issue and crisis during the year was mishandled, exploding the myth of government competence.

Early on a furore over the level of salaries paid to the top executives of some state funded charities brought down Fine Gael's ablest political strategist Frank Flannery. The Garda Whistle-blower controversy, complemented by allegations of bugging the Garda Ombudsman's office, morphed into a major crisis that saw the removal of the Justice Minister, his Department's top official, and the Garda Commissioner.

Soon after, an obvious populist proposal to give free GP care to the under sixes ran foul of public outrage at a parallel attempt to save money by reviewing – and withdrawing – thousands of discretionary medical cards issued to genuinely sick people. The official protestation that the under-sixes proposal was the first stage of a roll out of universal free GP access fooled no one, with medical experts pointing out that this was to prioritise the healthiest ahead of those in greater medical need. The medical card fiasco was in part responsible for the Government's lamentable showing in the mid-year elections, which prompted

Tea Party Politics Irish Style?

The very latest polls suggest that in the next election the three major centre parties would be unable to muster a majority between them, while Sinn Fein's support continues to grow, and the strongest support is for independents of various hues (chiefly left-wing).

Most worrying is that the trend in the polls evident throughout 2014 resembles the melt down in Fianna Fail's support before 2011. One or two polls could be dismissed but not the last half dozen which have seen support for Labour collapse and support for Fine Gael also decline sharply. As I write there is nothing to suggest, beyond pious hopes, that this will change. And, where public opinion has actually been tested – in the local and European elections in mid-year and in subsequent by elections – the poll figures have been, ominously, validated.

The Government must be asking itself "Where did it all go wrong?" The most secure government in the country's history has imploded so severely in 2014 that its chances of being returned to power seem slim.

Nobody said it would be easy – three years of unremitting austerity with tax increases and benefit cuts had severely dented the Government's popularity. However, in the absence of any credible alternative, with the economic corner turning, and with the political kudos for successfully seeing off the Troika, 2014 promised much. Factoring in the gradual waning of mid-term unpopularity and two possibly favourable giveaway budgets before a 2016 election, the prospects last January seemed reasonably positive.

That at least was the theory. And, in the macro sense, things went according to plan. The economy bounced back big time and at a surprising pace. It appeared the Government had got it right – austerity worked. Debt targets were met, austerity seemed to be ending and there was talk of a billion to play around with in October's budget with the promise of more to come. Twelve months on, the Government is in a shambles, with support for both coalition parties seriously degraded.

In retrospect, in political terms, the Troika Era was an extended honeymoon period for the Government. All the nasty cuts and new taxes could be blamed on the Troika and Fianna Fail, which had let them in. A type




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the resignation of Labour leader Gilmore and the kicking sideways of accident prone Health Minister Reilly.

An attempt to relaunch the Government's Programme in July briefly held promise, with Ministers talking up the state of the economy and generating expectations of a giveaway October budget. In the event they oversold, with the budget's modest provisions satisfying nobody. But even before that the Government's credibility was further shredded by the McNulty Affair in which the Fine Gael candidate for a Senate vacancy lost after revelations that he had been nominated to a state board at the last minute in order to boost his election credentials. Small potatoes stuff but many saw it as the type of stroke politics and political sleaze associated with Fianna Fail.

Next came the revelation that the junior Environment Minister was employing, as his driver, a fellow party member who was also a government appointed director of the new Irish Water quango. Stroke politics with a vengeance. A hasty Government announcement of a new system (a "portal") governing public appointments to state boards – long a traditional form of patronage for rewarding loyal supporters – was greeted with derision.

Cue Irish Water – a slow burner. The Troika proposed in 2010 that Ireland join the rest of her EU partners (and help bridge the budget deficit) by charging for water. Fianna

Fail, outgoing, had bought into this, and the new Government did likewise. A simple flat-rate charge would have sufficed while all aspects of the matter were examined, the issue complicated by the legacy factor – the existing infrastructure is inadequate, antique (some pipes date from the Nineteenth Century) and defective (with up to 40% of water lost through leakage).

In a catastrophic political misjudgement Irish Water was established, with start-up costs of several hundred million dollars, much of this for consultants, an acknowledged level of over manning from the start and with some contractual systems locked into place until 2027. Public anger was compounded by the revelation of a bonus culture in salaries, including those underperforming. When the likely hefty scale of the charges became known, the issue boiled over. Street protests culminated in a massive demonstration by over 100,000 in November. The left had a field day.

The issue became a lightning rod for discontent, with the middle classes joining in. The Government blustered, then caved in, slashing and deferring the proposed charges. Those opposed remain adamant. Right now the Government is hunkering down and keeping fingers crossed but such is the degree of public disenchantment that all the mainstream parties are running for cover. Is this the beginning of tea-party politics, Irish-style?

Top TIR Awards

Well here we go again. How many is this now? Radio co-host and producer Imelda Bhroga informs me it is the 24th time Chicago has handed out these

Awards, with all the big muscle stick that goes with being recognized in the best music city in the world. Let's begin.

Male Musician Of The Year 2015

Leonard Barry

This uilleann piper from Kerry produced a masterpiece in 2014 called, *New Road*. This wonderful musician was brought to our attention by Alan O'Leary of Copperplate Distribution in London. The 14 cuts on this album represent not only the best of Irish piping today, but also the best of Irish Trad today. *New Road* is a beautifully realized contribution to Irish music from an absolutely terrific musician. A stunner.

Female Musician Of The Year 2015

Louise Mulcahy

Louise is the virtuoso piper and flute player from the iconic Mulcahy family. She grew up Co. Leitrim and in a manner of speaking, she has grown up in front of us all. She and her sister Michelle, along with dad, Mick, have given us two wonderful cd's as a trio. Sister Michelle gave us an award-winning solo *Suaimhneas*, which helped redefine modern harp playing. Now comes Louise with *Tuning the Road*. A complete wonder of an album from a truly brilliant musician. They do not come better than Louise Mulcahy, and that is good enough, indeed.

Male Vocalist Of The Year 2015

Sean Tyrell

Sean released *Galway Bay* this year. You could well argue he is the best of all. This Connemara vocalist released an album filled with classics of the genre. Whether it be *The Mountains of Mourne*, *Galway Bay*, or *The Wild Colonial Boy*, don't think you have heard these classics until you have heard Sean sing them. Like another master, Mick Moloney, Sean has grown fonder of these often satirized or ignored classics of Irish music. The understanding of these songs takes maturity. Sean sings them as only Sean can, and they are transformed into something wondrously minimal, modern, relevant, and with all the emotional kick still there. Another winner from Sean Tyrell.

Female Vocal Album Of The Year 2015

May Morning Dew by Rita Gallagher

There are those who say Rita Gallagher is the best Irish female singer in the world. She certainly is at the top of her game on this magnificent album. The exact date of when, where, and how we reviewed this cd is highly debatable. Good. That allows us



Tradition In Review

Bill Margeson



to reintroduce it to you now. This Donegal talent is unsurpassed in her grasp of sean nos singing. She is a master of the form. This album was released four years ago, believe it or not. It was only brought to our attention within the last 14 months, and that is what matters. She is everything Irish singing should be.

Vocal/Instrumental Album of the Year 2015 - Gather The Good

There is no group hotter in Irish Music than *We Banjo 3*. With the release of their new album, *Gather the Good*, the group has again established itself at the top of the pecking order. They are booked solidly all over the world, and for good reason. If their shows are getting a bit frenetic and overdone physically, the band retains its total musicianship. Long ago, we ran out of adjectives for these four lads from Galway. Their blend of Irish and Americana is perfection, cutting edge, and educational at the same time. Marvelous stuff from a group that still stops us dead in our tracks.

Trad Group of the Year 2015

Goitse

Goitse has established itself as a massively popular band among trad fans the world over. Rightly so. This wonderful quintet released *Tall Tales & Misadventures* to worldwide recognition in 2015. Rightly so. This talented group is highly respected and still young enough to have all their best years in front of them. They are wonderful. Their music is unequalled for energy, ability, and intelligence. So young to be so good. Wow!

New Group Of The Year 2015

The O'Schraives

The name of the album is *Family Day*, and it has instantly catapulted this Canadian family act into the top echelon of Irish/Canadian/Quebecois/Cajun music. Totally entertaining from start to finish. There is little to say about all of this, except you must get your hands on the album. Everything about this group is entertaining to the point where it makes them the best family group in Irish music. One of our major goals in

2015 is to see them live. Somewhere. Somehow. The O'Schraives rock!

Compendium Album Of The Year 2015 The Ultimate Guide to Irish Folk

The people at ARC asked the famous Irish music writer John O'Regan to put together a compendium album of what he would consider a true cross-section of Irish music. He has done so, brilliantly. The double cd contains 34 cuts. Essentially, everything you would ever need is here—if you are looking for a total experience. Some of these cuts work better than others. And, that is the way it should be in a compendium album.



The O'Schraives: Outside Weaver's Bottom, the shop of our friend, host and former Algoma Trad instructor, Mary Colmer, and her husband Neil in the amazing art town of Berea, Kentucky.

Pretty much everything is here, and no one likes everything. But, we love enough of this to recommend it 100%. A great job, from a terrific Irish music journo.

Emerging Artists Of The Year 2015

Cassie and Maggie MacDonald

Cassie and Maggie released their second album this year, *Sterling Road*, to international acclaim. This unbelievably gifted duo were raised in Nova Scotia, which means that quality playing and singing is in their DNA. These two young ladies have already won several awards and are booked constantly in Canada, with occasional forays into the States. Piano and fiddle are brought to the fore along with stunning vocals and perfect harmonies. They have obviously received formal training, as well as having joined in hundreds of sessions. They have also appeared in France, Germany, Bermuda, and England. The train is just gathering steam and leaving the station on these new stars. It is going to be a glorious journey, and it is already well-begun.

All cd's available online, *but even better from Jack Baker at Rampant Lion in Villa Park, Illinois, or Alan O'Leary's Copperplate Distribution in London, England! Ta!*

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The Irish Rover

By James McClure



Home of the Future for Rent Today in Lake Geneva

The last thing Carl Strandlund wanted when he created the Lustron Home was to create a rare collector's item. Just the opposite, Strandlund envisioned a nation crammed with 300,000 of the mass-produced, easy to assemble family homes made of all metal from the roof and chimney down to the baked enamel interiors and colorful porcelain outside walls.

Construction of the homes started in 1949 and although they would find their way to 30 some states including Alaska, no more than 2500 were built by the time the Lustron Corporation went out of business in 1951.

Three remain in Lake Geneva, and only one of those has retained the original colors and design that rolled out of the Columbus, Ohio former World War II military aircraft plant bound for the corner of Madison and Grant in Lake Geneva.

The home is owned by longtime Lake Geneva resident Mike Pody, who has owned the Lustron for 15 years. Pody currently has the house up for rent and while he has his eye open for prospective renters, he says that he has had his eye on the home for most of his life.

Standing inside the surprisingly modern looking and spacious all metal starter home, Pody points outside toward Grant Street and motions with a level hand moving from right to left past the big metal framed all-window while relating that back in the 1960's "I would ride my back past this window and imagine what it was like inside," says Pody.

On the outside it is a royal light blue color lined with pale yellow window frames, one of four original color offerings: Maize Yellow, Dove grey, Surf Blue, and Desert Tan, carefully selected by Howard Ketchum, Inc., described in promotional materials as "one of the nation's foremost color experts." The homes were available in four exterior colors: Maize Yellow, Dove grey, Surf Blue, and Desert Tan, carefully selected by Howard Ketchum, Inc., described in promotional materials as "one of the nation's foremost color experts."

And how does the house look to Pody

nearly 50 years later? "Exactly the same," he says with a laugh. "It hasn't changed a bit."

All part of the original idea.

Pre-fabricate an all metal structure and make it easy to use and maintain with good looks that take little more than an occasional wash down by hose or rain. Nothing to rust due to moisture or fall prey to woodwork-eating termites. Even the chimney is made of steel as is the all-steel slate roof that now has stood up to the worst of Southeastern Wisconsin winters for a little under 65 years. Never replaced. As for the home itself, Pody pronounces "it's built like a tank!"

"The thing that amazes me is the bedrooms," says Pody, who slides back the space saving pocket bedroom door to reveal a large master bedroom. "These bedrooms must have been really big for the time. You don't see many homes from the 1950 time period with this room."

Or storage. Near the mirror and built in vanity location are shelf upon shelf of little doors that slide open to reveal lots of space for clothing and goods. "It was really ahead of its time," adds Pody, who owns and leases a number of homes in the Lake Geneva area. So he knows a bit about architectural styles and what makes this home desirable. "Location!" he immediately points out, adding that "if you want to get anywhere in Lake Geneva or downtown by the bay this is extremely well situated," notes Pody. Its location is near upper downtown restaurants and short drive or long walk to the lake is handy.

Originally the home was a top-of-the-line Lustron model called the Westchester Deluxe 02, featuring two bedrooms. A three bedroom version was also available.

The Westchester line was divided into deluxe and standard options, both available with two or three bedrooms. The square footage and floor plans are the same as the original 02 and 03 models, and all came with a Thor combination dishwasher-clothes washer. Buyers could opt for a double sink instead of the Thor system to save \$215 on the price of the house. The Thor appliances are extremely rare (Pody's doesn't have one) in part because the Thor idea of washing your bloomers in the same bin where you suds the spaghetti sauce off your plates was

more than some consumers could handle.

Much more enchanting has been the overall space-age look of the home which was seen as an easy solution to an atomic-age problem: how to go about solving a severe housing shortage for the many World War II veterans who had returned home since 1945 and wanted to start or enlarge families within an affordable and quickly available home. Lustrons would arrive in a special delivery truck and could be assembled from



a bay window, and floor tile. Kitchen wall panels are 2 feet square."

Picture windows, but hopefully no nailing of pictures to mar the original and now historic interior walls of the homes marketed with the very truthful Truman-era slogan of "The House You've Been Waiting For."

"Pictures and decorations are best put up with magnets," notes Pody, who says with pride that the real decorative feature is the house itself with its bold colors and bright porcelain design. "Every time I'm in here I see people outside stopping their cars and staring or taking pictures."

Sadly the homes are getting more rare as they give way to desires for larger homes on pricey land or to a wrecking ball. Most of the largest collection were on the Marine Corps Base in Quantico, and almost almost all of the dozens there were gone by 2006, declared outdated and too small for modern military families. Two remain as maintenance storage sheds.

While Pody awaits his next rental

instructions in a suggested 360 man hours.

Pody's Westchester would prove to be the most affordable model. An original 1949 sales brochure touts that this model offers "many deluxe features including built-in bookshelves, bedroom vanity-storage wall, eleven closets and overhead storage cabinets, oil or gas radiant panel heating, Thor dishwasher-clothes washer combination, china cabinet passthrough, large picture windows, large service and storage area,"

with a simple hand numbered sign out front of 1005 Grant Street, he has a pretty good idea of who will rent it next. "It's the same people who really like the idea of a Retro House. And it's easier to maintain than most."

Deep down, he acknowledges, going back to his days as a passing boyhood neighbor, that the home is neither his nor his tenants, but everyone's. "I like sharing this property. So many people like to see it."



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Ward Music Archives in Milwaukee Gets Great Review

Online since October 2013, this incredible archive of Irish sheet music makes freely available high-quality digitized images of public domain print music held by the Ward Irish Music Archives in Milwaukee, WI. The collection includes music published from approximately 1750 to the present. Irish American content is particularly strong. The browsing interface is remarkably easy to use and allows one to search by a number of facets, including instrumentation, music in the public domain, subject, and place of publication, to name a few. In addition, the archive provides a growing selection of "galleries" focusing on thematic groupings of sheet music; these galleries feature brilliantly designed landing pages containing useful contextual information about the topic as well as links to relevant sheet music. Users have access to information about approximately 5,000 pieces of Irish music, but they have full access only to those items published before 1923. Music published since that year remains under copyright. Even so, the archive provides invaluable metadata about copyrighted material, along with information about how to procure high-resolution copies of these currently undigitized items for a fee.

This archive's design is consis-

tently elegant, uncluttered, and richly illustrated. The potential for such a resource is enormous: scholars of 19th-century visual



culture, printing, publishing, illustration, design, technology, and history--as well as music performers, composers, and historians--are richly served by this archive. Whereas online resources such as Comhaltas <<http://comhaltas.ie/music/>> provide free access to Irish sheet music, no other site offers the visual and historical scope of the Ward archive. This resource possesses value and relevance far beyond its scope, because in addition to being an invaluable source for Irish music, the site sets a precedent for online archive design and functionality.

--J. G. Matthews, Washington State University Libraries

Free Online Access To Historical Irish Catholic Records Warmly Welcomed By Ireland XO

The National Diaspora Programme, Ireland Reaching Out (Ireland XO), warmly welcomed today the announcement that the National Library of Ireland is to give free online access to its Catholic Church Records collection. This unprecedented move will enable many millions of people to successfully trace their roots to Ireland.

The records are considered the single most important source of information on Irish family history prior to the 1901 Census. They cover 1,091 parishes throughout Ireland, and consist primarily of baptismal and marriage records.

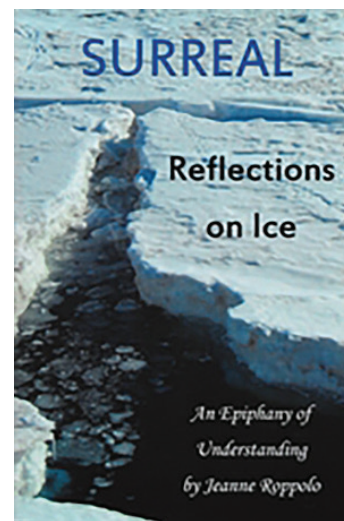
The National Library provides free access to its microfiche records at its research rooms in Kildare Street in Dublin. The only online access to date has been through a third party paid genealogical service.

Ireland XO Founder & Chairman Mike Feerick stated that "Ireland XO has been campaigning for free online access to these valuable records since the organisation was founded five years ago. Every Ireland XO volunteer knows how important it is that these records are freely available to everyone. The fact that these records have been available online only through an expensive paid service has meant that a huge number of people of Irish descent worldwide have been unable to trace their roots in Ireland."

Clare Doyle, Heritage Resource Manager at Ireland XO added that "the impact of charging for online access to these records has been greatly underestimated and, in many cases, prohibited the advancement of genealogical research by the Irish Diaspora. A huge number of Irish descendants living abroad are there as a result of famine and pre-famine emigration. To trace so far back, you simply have to look at a lot of records, and if you have to pay for each, the cost of your research simply becomes too expensive."

Since 2009, Ireland XO volunteers have been tireless in their quest to uncover ancestral origins for the thousands of Irish descendants who get in contact each month. With the launch of its new website next March, and the online release of the Church archives in summer, 2015 promises to be a very exciting time for Ireland XO. It currently has 70,000 members worldwide and over 3,500 thousand parish-based volunteers across Ireland, north and south. Ireland XO volunteers help connect Irish Diaspora to their communities of origin in Ireland, welcoming them back when they visit and extending membership of the "virtual" parish community worldwide. Online access to the 18th and 19th century Church Records is expected to stimulate a huge interest in Irish genealogical research.

Reflections on Ice



Surreal: Reflections on Ice - An Epiphany of Understanding, By Jeanne Roppolo

The true story of a 57-year-old grandmother who reclaims her soul and passion for life while experiencing the bizarre culture and exotic adventures of living and working at McMurdo Station, Antarctica. available at www.jeanneroppolo.com

www.grandmagoesto.com Her books include: Grandma Goes to Antarctica, Grandma Goes to the South Pacific, Grandma Goes to the Alaskan Wilderness, The Jr. Iditarod: Alaska's Little-Known Sled Dog Race

Clancy's Irish Heritage Scholarship Applications Now Online

Clancy's Heritage Scholarship applications are now available at www.clancyssscholars.com. The scholarships are to reward students of participating schools that are involved in Irish heritage activities such as Irish dance, music, sport, theater, language, etc. Sponsored by the owners of Clancy's Pizza pub in Oak Lawn, the application deadline is February 15th. For more information on how to get involved in Irish heritage activities or if you wish to co-sponsor a student for your school or alma mater, visit www.clancyssscholars.com, email info@eatatclancys.com or come to Clancy's Pizza Pub (now with additional seating area) in Oak Lawn for live Irish music every Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday.

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Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



There was a 'sinister fringe element' at the Anti Water Charges March today in Dublin. The thing is that it was rather heavily represented not by those who were there to peacefully protest but by those who represent our government.

For me, that sadly includes members of the Garda. I say sadly because I have spent a lot of time trying to tell fellow protestors that the Garda are not our enemy, that we have to keep focused on who that enemy really is – our employees, those who are paid by us to represent our interests and yet who cannot engage with us in any meaningful way.

Those who have been reduced to sneaking in the back doors of hotels rather than confront their voters; those who speak down to us as if we were particularly dense children, unable to learn the valuable lessons that our masters wish to teach us; those who now have no legitimate mandate, given that they have reneged on every promise/lie made to us when they were voted in.

Yes, our corrupt government.

Today I witnessed at first hand a police force who appear to now have (perhaps unhappily for many of them) become an extension of the arm of this corrupt government that seems to see themselves as accountable to no one except their masters in Europe and their own pension schemes. And when a police force that in theory is there to protect the people allows that to happen to them then we are in a lot of trouble indeed.

Why were happy marchers who had come from all over

the country in order to show their discontent with that government suddenly finding themselves being herded along cordoned-off streets and left floundering as barages of misinformation were fired at them?

Why was it suddenly being put out that the meeting place had been changed from Merrion Square to the GPO? And that worked, by the way, as I witnessed many docilely turning aside and doing as was quietly 'suggested' to them. Thankfully I was with a group that simply ignored that. Also thankfully, word spread and many turned back again.

There is no doubt in my mind that with the blockade of Kildare Street and the Dail itself it was intended that we would react like animals and consequently storm through their barricades. Well, you

pen people up and tell them where they can't go – and where they can't go is to the front gates of their own building—and you will have a reaction. Keep poking a dog and it will eventually bite you.

But then, those in the Dail not only know that but hope and pray to whatever swine gods our swine pray to, for exactly that reaction.

What a triumph that would have been for the bastards hiding in the Dail... if we had just crashed through. They would have been able to show to the world that this is what we were about. And how sad for them that it didn't happen.

Everything was wrong with today. There were far too many political parties there with their own agendas. And this thing about shaking buckets in our faces: screw that. Many of us had worked an extra day last week in order to be there on a work day.

What the hell is wrong with you flunkies, doing the dirty work of your various parties? Look around and see how many of your party leaders

have wholeheartedly stood behind the demonstrators. Trust me, it will not compare to the amount of eye-on-the-future toadies who are sitting on the fence, still waiting -- even with all the evidence in front of them – to see how this utter fiasco will pan out.

What the hell happened today? At the first march in Dublin there was minimal police presence. At the march here in Galway I saw a grand total of one.

And everything went smoothly.

Don't tell me that it was coincidence that today they were wall-to-wall. They were wired up for trouble because that is exactly what Kenny, Burton and every other one of our contemptible gougers wanted.

So now the right to peaceful protest outside our own Dail chambers, even to walk on Kildare Street has been taken

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Piping It In

Jack Baker



A new year and I'm still reviewing the last of the good releases from last year and first on my leftover list is the latest from one of the most popular Celtic rock bands on the American festival circuit, The Elders (www.theelders.com).

Since they burst onto the Irish music scene in 1998, the Elders have delighted crowds all over the US with their high energy stage show. Unlike many "Celtic rock" bands, the Elders actually make music, not noise. They have great stage presence, musical talent, good taste in the music they choose to present, a huge fan base and are some of the nicest people to work with. The band consists of Ian Byrne, lead vocalist who also does drums, percussion and whistle; Steve Phillips, another talented singer

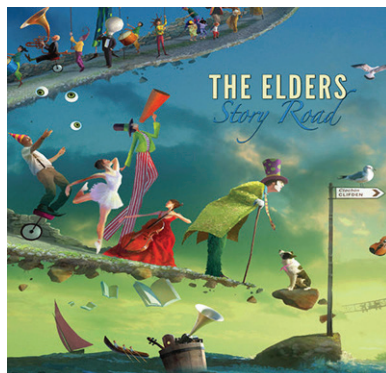
who also performs on guitar and mandolin; Brent Hoad, another fine singer who also plays keyboards, fiddle and guitar; Norm Dahlor, yet another fine voice who plays a mean bass and doubles on guitar and banjo; Kian Byrne on drums, bass and mandolin and Colin Farrell, on fiddle, whistle, flute and uilleann pipes.

Having so many fine voices results in some really interesting vocals and harmonies, definitely a unique treat. The bands attention to detail results in some truly fine renditions of tradition songs in a style that has lots of life and energy.

The new CD, "Story Road" has all original songs by the band and, believe me, there are some gems here that will become classics in time. The first and 7th

tracks were very interesting but the 5th track, "Saint Patrick's Battalion" was my favorite, although there wasn't a clinker in the bunch.

It's rare to find a band that can perform studio recordings with all the verve and energy of a live performance but the Elders pull it off, in spades. I look forward to watching and listening to the



Elders this summer at festivals, but in the meantime I'll enjoy listening to this new CD, there's a lot here to enjoy.

Ken Onstad of New Folk Records (www.newfolkrecords.com) continues to come up with new treats for Celtic music aficionados, and this time he's found us a doozy. I'll tell you about it in a minute but first a little background. Scotland and Ireland are not the only countries with bagpipe traditions. Spain, primarily Galicia and Asturia have very

popular bagpiping traditions. The Asturian bagpipe is called the Gaita Asturiana. It is a one drone pipe somewhat larger than the pipes played in Galicia. It is not standardized like the Scottish highland pipes but comes in a number of keys and designs. One of the most accomplished players of the Gaita asturiana is a fellow who goes by the name of Hevia (www.hevia.es). He had two CDs available on EMI that have been out of circulation for awhile now but the CD just released by New Folk Records gives us a chance to hear this unique instrument played by this talented piper. "Obsession" is the name of the recording and it features Hevia backed by a number of contemporary Spanish musicians and even a choir. The music reminds me somewhat of Phil Coulter's use of a choir as an instrument and it's equally successful in that use. This album was previously only released in Spain and Argentina by EMI but now, thanks to New Folk, we get to enjoy it too. Enjoy it you will, the music is lyrical and flowing and wonderfully complex. Time to expand your piping horizons.

I know I promised a review of Wendy Maslaasc's new CD last month but the bloody thing has not made it here yet. It'll probably show up the day after

I submit this, but it still gives us something to look forward to. Speaking of something to look forward to, the Northwest Celtic Festival will be held in Hoffman Estates at the Sears Center on Sunday 22 March 2015. I know I previously said it would be on Saturday but the date was changed so I wanted to let you know as soon as I could because this is one show you don't want to miss. Free admission, free parking and it's all indoors, what more could you ask? I'll keep you posted on who gets signed to play but in the three years this festival has been going on, they've had some pretty spectacular performers. More to follow but mark your calendar now!

One of the newest pipe bands in the Chicago area is the Glenshinnoch Pipe Band (Valley of the Fox, as in Fox River, pretty clever I thought). They're looking for drummers and pipers too but they need drummers bad. They meet in Naperville on Friday nights so if you're interested you can get more info at their website, www.glenshinnoch.org.

That's it for now for me, I'll be in Florida for Jan and Feb, I know tough life so you'll find Gayle or Nate at the store 630-834-8108 but you can still reach me at store@rampantlion.com Slainté

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Irish Books and Plays in Review

Frank West



Andrew Jackson: Irish-American Hero

January 8th is the two hundredth anniversary of one of the most pivotal events in American history. That is the date in 1815 when Irish-American General Andrew Jackson defeated a huge British invasion force.

The aim of that force was to seize the mouth of the Mississippi River at New Orleans. That would have given Britain control of the Mississippi River valley from there North to Canada, and from the Appalachian Mountains west to the Rockies.

Our country owes many things to the Scots Irish. They came here from Ireland in the 1600's and 1700's and have had a profound effect on our country and society ever since. Of all their contributions to our country there is space here only to discuss the three factors I feel are the most important.

First their insistence that our constitution guarantee separation of church and state with restriction

on the power of the President. The second is Andrew Jackson's victory at the 1815 Battle of New Orleans, and the third is the victory of General George Patton in 1945 in the Battle of the Bulge.

All quotes are from **Born Fighting - How the Scots-Irish Shaped America**, by James Webb. He is the author of many books; a highly decorated Marine; former Secretary of Defense; Senator from Virginia, (he did not seek reelection because of the gridlock in Washington). Webb might run for President in 2016. I highly recommend this book. It is lively and has many colorful and insightful observations.

The Scots-Irish emigrated from Ulster in Ireland's North. Large numbers of Scots-Irish came in the 1600's and 1700's to the colonies in America. They endured the harrowing sea voyage because they desperately wanted religious and political freedom. As Presbyterians, they had been harshly discriminated against by the Church of England. Many jobs,

professions, military careers, and all positions in the government were closed to them. The Church of England was the official state religion in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland and the English king was head of that church.

The Scots-Irish brought with them a strong tradition of independence. Each Presbyterian church ruled itself. The congregation elected its ministers, and everybody could vote and participate in church business.

With that tradition of democratic participation and individual responsibility the Scots-Irish strongly supported the American Revolution. They made up a large percentage of George Washington's army.

When the Constitution came to be written, they strongly approved of the checks and balances, the division of power between Congress and the President. This would prevent a President from becoming a king, and keep power in the hands of the citizens and their representatives in Congress. Later, the Scots-Irish insisted that the rights of Americans be spelled out in the first ten amend-

ments to the Constitution, and especially the First Amendment. It says "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

During the War of 1812, the British were so successful in many places in America. They were so powerful that a British Army burned Washington. But they made a big mistake when they thought they would easily defeat Andrew Jackson and his rag tag army! They sent a huge 9,000 man army in a sea-borne assault. They planned to seize New Orleans. That would give them control of the Mississippi River Valley and keep the new United States a small, weak country. It would strangle the towns in Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee.

Jackson "had the leadership style that combined praise and discipline in order to get the most out of every soldier, and ability to out think his enemies. He also had a ruthless ferocity once combat began."

Jackson's men admired and respected him. He "made no distinc-

tion between himself and his men . . . Early in 1813, he ordered his officers to give their horses to sick soldiers, turning over his own, to march alongside his soldiers who began calling him Old Hickory because of his unbreakable resoluteness."

Warned by the pirate, Jean Lafite, that a very large British fleet was approaching New Orleans, he assembled a small army of about 4,000 frontier militia, pirates, free blacks, and Native Americans. They were opposed by 8 to 9,000 battle hardened British soldiers.

Jackson commanded his men to fight Indian style - use whatever cover was available. They used an earthen rampart and cotton bales. He ordered his men not to fire until the British were almost on them.

The resulting battle brought bloody and appalling losses for the British. The new nation could continue to expand into the vast Louisiana Purchase.

Jackson was elected President in 1828 and introduced Jacksonian democracy. This was a "code of honor, self-reliance, equality, individualism, and courage. His followers measure others not by titles or professions but by personal honor, dignity, and the willingness to fight for their beliefs." This saying of Jackson's says it all. "One man with courage makes a majority."



Words With Melody

By Melody Gallagher



All That is Solid Melts Into Air

Darragh McKeon's novel *All That is Solid Melts into Air* is a raw look into mid-1980s Soviet Union and the nuclear meltdown that impacted the lives of millions and numerous future generations. When an explosion at the Chernobyl power plant causes massive amounts of radiation to pour into the air, families are evacuated from their homes to escape the poison that's rapidly spreading. As whole forests begin to die and animals bleed from their ears, a population that knows close to nothing

about this invisible assailant is left to fix itself.

Although described as "an end-of-empire novel", the beauty in *All That is Solid* does not come from a wide view of the politics and details of the key players involved but instead from the smaller, everyday characters. McKeon's story weaves together the lives of those impacted such as the young children evacuating with their family and the infected victims whom even nurses do not touch.

Grigory Blovkin, a surgeon called in to help clean up the mess, at first believes that those in charge will finally be forced to answer

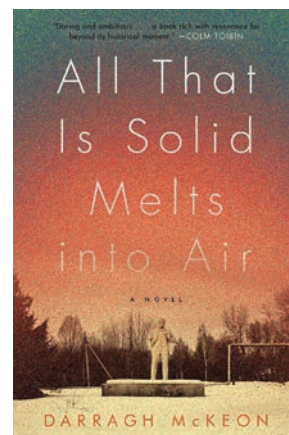
for their mistakes and a methodical, organized cleanup can start. However as evacuation plans for surrounding cities are ignored and safety procedures abandoned, he becomes tormented struggling to work under a government more concerned about its international appearance than its own people.

"...no one sees to anything, Grigory. We'll have to clean this up with our own bare hands."

Unable to do much more, he buries himself in his job at the hospital. He witnesses first hand the damage and the sickness left behind: infants born only partially developed, organs of exposed

workers breaking down and turning to mush, cancer and tumors forming in children and adults.

Meanwhile back home in Moscow, people continue on with their lives, the danger that surrounds them nothing more than



gossip. Here, the novel's focus shifts away from the power plant to those lives who are seemingly untouched by the explosion. Families struggle to feed themselves, and laborers suffer through abhorrent working conditions for fear of losing their job or worse. Yevgeni, a child piano prodigy, is more concerned by the bullying that plagues

him than the nuclear disaster not too far away. His aunt Maria, a factory worker living in fear of her past, struggles to decide if taking part in a workers' strike will better their lives or merely place those she cares about in danger. All the while rumors circulate of mutated animals, children losing hair, and a cover-up by the government to ensure that everything is fine.

All That is Solid is a powerful story about the Soviet Union just before its end. It's a shocking look into those impacted by the tragedy of Chernobyl and those consequences that still exist today. The book explores the hope of a future out of the sins of the past, and the mistakes for which future generations will have to pay. McKeon is the kind of writer who gives his story the quiet yet powerful voice that will echo for years to come.

The Irish American

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Save the Dates

Annual IASCW Members Dinner
March 14th, 3:30 to 8 p.m.

Jailbreak 7's Rugby Tourney
Hosted by Shamrock Rugby Club
June 13



The Irish American Society of County Will hereby pledges itself to the following ideals:

- * To promote Irish culture in America and to preserve Irish-American Heritage
- * To promote education, friendship, understanding and cooperation among members, and the community in general.
- * To promote and cooperate in the general welfare work of the community.

Manhattan Irish Fest March 6 & 7

Here we go again! This time of year is always exciting! Let the planning and preparing begin for another successful Manhattan Irish Fest. This year's festival will be held on Friday, March 6th and Saturday, March 7th. In 2015, we will maintain the mission to preserve and to teach lessons of Irish heritage to the next generations, as well as the community at large.

Manhattan Irish Fest is still one of the largest St.

Patrick's Day Festivals in the Chicago Metropolitan Area. In the past 20 years, the Manhattan Irish Fest committee, along with the help of the community and the organizations involved, have raised and donated over \$160,000. This funding has been given back to local organizations, scholarships, youth sports and many other groups around the area. We will continue to give back those profits to the community.

Organizations we donate to:

IASCW
Manhattan Park Foundation
Manhattan Park District
Manhattan Chamber
Illinois Celtics
Operation Care Package
Manhattan Food Pantry

Bliadhna Mhath Úr Happy New Year from the IASCW Board

The Irish in Will County have been active in 2014, and we're on a roll to have a very busy 2015! Last year, we had numerous social and cultural events, a trip

to Milwaukee Irish Fest, historical lectures and more! The IASCW granted two scholarships for students to study in Ireland. We also partnered a second year with St. Patrick's School Alumni in Joliet to grant three scholarships in the memory of Pat Paul.

As the presenter of Fourth Annual Will County Celtic Fest, the September celebration featured a tremendous lineup of entertainment for both the adults and the kids. We wrapped up the year sponsoring a tree in the Festival of Trees and having a float in the Joliet Christmas Parade.

On tap for 2015 are cultural events, a beer tasting, and plenty of rugby. Visit us at www.CountyWillIrish.net or email me at schaal.chris@yahoo.com. We'd love to have you join us. The more the merrier!

High School Students Study in Ireland

The IASCW grants scholarships for outstanding high school students to study in Ireland on the Irish Life Experience program. Applications will be distributed to high schools in Will County. Students must return the application

by February 23. Interviews will be conducted Feb. 28 and presented at the March 14 annual membership dinner. For more information, visit www.CountyWillIrish.net and www.IrishLifeExperience.com.

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22 Tips For Paper Clutter

1. Create a place for each paper to belong. If it doesn't have a "home", it becomes clutter.

2. Handle each piece of paper only once. Make decisions the FIRST time you touch a piece of paper.

3. Feed your wastebasket or recycle bin. It's not an evil monster that gobbles your important data. It's



by Rita Emmett

your friend who needs to be nourished. Feed it.

4. Get rid of what you don't need.

5. Skim material as soon as it arrives.

6. Open all snail mail near a wastebasket or recycle bin.

7. Try to get off junk mail lists and if they insist on sending you mail you don't need or want, don't even open it. Send it straight to the recycle bin.

8. If it takes less than a minute, do it now (read, recycle, toss, file, delete).

9. Create a place where all incoming mail goes till it can be sorted, tossed, recycled or put where it belongs.

10. Create a place where all incoming school papers go till they can be sorted, signed, reviewed, acted upon or filed.

11. Pass on to the appropriate person any papers someone else can handle.

12. Put papers where they belong.

13. Most monthly bills can be paid electronically. Saves time, cost of stamps, and paper clutter.

14. Realize the world won't end if you get rid of much of your paper.

15. Do you have stacks of magazines you will read "someday"? Why do you need all those? You don't! Eliminate whatever you don't have time to read. Stop subscribing.

16. Recycle it. Put used papers in a stack where people who need something to jot notes or print out an email joke can help themselves instead of taking a new piece.

17. Ask yourself: Do you really want to be caretaker of this paper? Do you really want to devote precious space to this?

18. If you have scraps of paper everywhere with phone numbers on them, get a spiral notebook. Enter all phone numbers & messages in it till it can either be responded to or entered where it belongs.

19. If you can get this same material from the internet or someone else, why keep it?

20. Take ten minutes each day to sort, file or toss papers. Do at beginning or end of work day, or do it during the commercials of the first hour of watching TV

21. Every day, before starting work, put away ten things on your desk.

22. Get rid of it

Emmett's Clutter Fact:

If you don't have a place to put something, it WILL become clutter.

When you don't have enough room for all your stuff, you don't need more room, you need less stuff.

Emmett's Admonition:

Don't consider your wastebasket or recycle bin to be an enemy who gobbles up your important data; consider it to be a friend who must be nourished and fed.

Above quotes from The Clutter-Busting Handbook by Rita Emmett

Rita Emmett is a "Recovered Pack Rat", a Professional Speaker, and best-selling author of The Procrastinator's Handbook; and The Clutter-Busting Handbook.

www.RitaEmmett.com for info on Stress Management, Procrastination and Clutter.

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Free Online Access to Irish Catholic Historical Records

The National Library of Ireland has announced today that it will give free online access to its archive of Catholic Church records, the earliest of which dates back to the 1700s. The records are considered the single most important source of information on Irish family history prior to the 1901 Census. They cover 1,091 parishes throughout Ireland, and consist primarily of baptismal and marriage records.

Since 2009, Ireland XO volunteers have been tireless in their quest to uncover ancestral origins for the thousands of Irish descendants who get in contact each month through irelandxo.com.

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LOOK OF THE LASS



the girls feel very welcomed! The weekend came to an end that evening where the ladies and several other Roses made their way back up

So, the Holiday Season is over. January is here. It may be gray, cold and windy outside, but there is something just around the corner to brighten our spirits! Thankfully, being Irish, we have the St. Patrick's Season just a few months away. And, we all know, the Irish like to celebrate leading up to March 17th with parties galore! So even February flies by!

Of course, this is my favorite time of year and my busiest time of year and surely makes the winter months speed by. A great group of volunteers get ready and plan for the much anticipated event, The Chicago Rose of Tralee Selection!

In December, we were lucky enough to have a visit from the 2014 Rose of Tralee herself, Maria Walsh. Maria and Colleen Nolan, the 2014 Chicago Rose hit the ground running for an entire weekend in December. They started the weekend off with placing ornaments on the Irish tree at the Museum of Science & Industry. Then off



2014 Rose of Tralee, Maria Walsh, and, Chicago Rose of Tralee, Colleen Nolan at Chicago Gaelic Park last month. Thomas Lydon, photographer

they went to Aidan, The Council General of Ireland & his wife, Maedhbh Cronin's, home for a lovely Christmastime party with music and readings, the ladies had a blast. The next morning they cheered on the Olympians at the Snowshoeing Event for Special Olympics at Mann Park. Colleen ran Maria around the City to the Christkindlmarket, Millennium Park and of course she couldn't leave without Chicago deep dish pizza! In the evening, they were welcomed by the Irish American Heritage Center where Maria was toured by Kathy O'Neill and met by some of the Board Members. The ladies then went up to a party in the Erin Room to meet some of the founding members of the Irish American Heritage Center. On Sunday, Maria and Colleen attended the Christmas Celebration Mass and Breakfast at Gaelic Park, followed by the Christmas-time Show starring Tony Kenny. Marian Ryan, the General Manager welcomed them with special seating and truly made

north to the Galway Arms for the 6th Annual Christmas Carol Session. And, again, the owner of Galway Arms supplied the ladies with special seating, food & drink!

Everyone was thrilled to see these ladies in Chicago. They were welcomed by everyone with such hospitality. I must say, I was very proud during the weekend

as I watched my Irish friends roll out the red carpet for our visitor, Maria. She was absolutely amazed by the commitment to keep our Irish Heritage alive for the next generation. The children at mass & Irish breakfast, the little one's sitting on the knees of their parents during an Irish session and even the younger generation bringing their Grandparents to the Christmas show at Gaelic Park, is indeed a testament to keeping our heritage alive. We were sitting with a young lady during breakfast at our table and her name was Maggie, and she said, "I LOVE Gaelic Park! I love to go to mass here, I love to have Sunday breakfast here and I have been doing it for years. It is one of my favorite places!" How wonderful is that!

Now, hang in there. Know that March is coming soon. Hurry it along by joining in on the fun. Sign up for the South Side Irish Queen Contest coming in February at Bourbon Street! This contest is dur-

Continued to page 18

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We had a sleep-over with our 5 year old grand daughter Charlotte over the holidays. I stopped by the Berwyn library to pick out some films I thought she might enjoy. Keeping her busy was my main goal, although I'd heard so much about "Frozen", I'll admit to being a bit curious.

As luck would have it, they had it! I grabbed a handful of other kid flicks just in case. While browsing the stacks I came across an old favorite, 'Darby O'Gill and the Little People'.

"Frozen" turned out to be great, but it was Darby O'Gill that I watched a half dozen times that weekend. Charlotte was too "Frozen" obsessed to appreciate the rich history of Irish mythology in "Darby" I was hoping to teach her.

Walt Disney released "Darby O'Gill" in 1959. It's a folksy tale of how crafty old codger Darby and his daughter Katie outsmart all the leprechauns in Ireland. The film featured a young Sean Connery as Michael McBride, Katie's future hubby.

What makes the film so fun is the delightful performance of the late

Irish comedian Jimmy O'Dea as Brian Connors, the King of the Leprechauns. O'Dea is perfect as

the conniving mischievous king with a thirsty weakness for poitin. I wouldn't be surprised to learn that Jimmy O'Dea is somehow an Irish cousin of our own Man from Clare, PJ O'Dea!

You gotta hand it to the great Walt Disney. No way would they make a film like that today.

But what if they did?

Ireland has a rich history of mythology with stories that have stood the test of time. What about some of our own Irish-American mythology? What about a film based on probably the most mythological South Side Irish hero ever known? The Legendary Ferocious Frank O'Hooligan.

Born in Kilrush, County Clare in 1939, Ferocious Frank O'Hooligan, was the seventh son of Finbar and Mary O'Hooligan. The family emigrated to Chicago in 1946 where Finbar opened a tavern on 79th Street, not far from Sheehy's Funeral Home and Riley's Trick Shop.

Young Frank was enrolled at Little Flower where he would become the youngest altar boy in their history when he learned all the Latin for the mass in first grade. By second grade he knew all the priest's Latin as well, and did not endear himself to many of the priests when he would occasionally correct their pronunciation after mass.

Of course things were different in those days. A priest wouldn't think twice about cracking the little wise ass across the kisser for his insolence. But Ferocious Frankie would have none of it and many's the morning the sacristan would arrive to find one of the priests knocked out cold as Frankie polished off the remaining wine in the cruets and beat it out of the sacristy, "Hiya Mrs. Hickey, gotta run, late for class, I think Father fell down and hit his head!"

By the time Frankie entered Mt. Carmel as a freshman he was 6'6",

weighted 200 lbs, and the hair on his knuckles was like wire.

In sophomore year, he won a bet one day during Lent when he wolfed down thirty-six tuna sandwiches in one lunch period at Carmel. And these were the kind with the pickles in the tuna salad.

In the city championship game against Tilden at Soldier Field, O'Hooligan threw six touchdown passes, and caught three of them himself! Yes, he was mighty!

After declining a football scholarship to Notre Dame he married his childhood sweetheart, Mary, the most beautiful girl on 79th Street, the daughter of the proprietor of Riley's Trick Shop. Yes he married Riley's Daughter.



Frank and Mary had 11 kids in the old neighborhood. On his first day on the job for the Chicago Police Department he foiled a bank robbery in the Loop. Frank was cashing out his account on Christmas eve when two masked men pulled out shotguns and announced themselves and

the hold-up.

O'Hooligan overpowered them both with a mystical wrestling hold he had learned in Kilrush from his father Finbar and instantly turned the two assailants into donkeys. Incredulous reporters asked him later how he did it, and Frankie told them he, "Just gave them the ol' ass-hat!"

Probably his greatest feat was at Plumber's Hall in 1968 at the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade fundraiser. A faulty sound system had triggered an unusual outbreak of incoherence among all those attending, almost like the Tower of Babel. The demonic possession had everyone in the hall speaking in alien tongues.

Frank ran into the kitchen where they were cooking the corned beef and poured a fifth of Paddy's Whiskey into the boilers.

When the food was served it had a calming effect on the crowd and suddenly all could once again communicate and the babbling was reduced to a comfy murmur of intellectual repartee. The incident became known as "Frank O'Hooligan and the Corned Beef of Wisdom."

But who am I kidding? Hollywood would never go for South-side Irish mythology. Except for maybe the final scene of the film at Frank's wake.

His body was sent back to Dublin for burial and the Jewish undertaker, a cousin of Briscoe, was overhead telling his assistant, "I couldn't close the casket with the size of his shillelagh!"

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View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



The Northern Crisis: Forty Shades of Green

To stabilise the political structure of Northern Ireland, you need more than a whopping big wad of cash, but having one would certainly be a very good start.

When both the Irish Taoiseach Enda Kenny and the British Prime Minister David Cameron exited emergency talks at Belfast's Stormont Parliament Buildings on Friday December 12th, green nationalism hastened to align itself to the form of the green that it most fervidly espouses: Gerry Adams criticised the British government for offering "funny money"; Martin McGuinness stated that the talks could not advance without the promise of "new money".

If the talks were, and are, about finding common ground, then unionists are unequivocally on the same side on this question. First Minister of Northern Ireland, Peter Robinson, maintained that if Cameron "wants to bribe us, to bribe us with our own money comes a bit short." But bribing with the right money is clearly the way to go.

The degree to which identity politics pervades and vexes Northern Ireland is routinely overestimated. Cross-border initiatives have shown again and again, and with great success, how easily the Dublin government can curry favour with both communities in the North by supplying funds: stump up and everyone is on board.

Consider the example of university student fees. It costs several thousand euro per annum more to attend

a Northern university than a Southern one (British universities are still more expensive). The prospect of money-saving has frequently conquered the reluctance of even the most die-hard young unionist to go south to study. Add a financial incentive to do so and, well, agonising over tribal affiliation, flags and emblems becomes easy enough to overcome.

Currently, through its Reconciliation Fund, the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs ploughs 2.7 million euro per annum into such reconciliation projects "to create better understanding between people and traditions on the island of Ireland and between Ireland and Britain." A small fund, granted, but still it is symbolic of a broader ambition. Its strategy is to kill with kindness the lingering misgivings that people from different traditions may have about working together. And that strategy is working a treat.

What unites David Cameron and Enda Kenny, by contrast, is the austerity doctrine, the wish to disinvest, to impose cuts to basic services as a way of solving everyone's problems. It is something economist Paul Krugman has likened to medieval medical treatment where "you bled patients to treat their ailments, and when the bleeding made them sicker, you bled them even more." This tried, tested and failed system is particularly unsettling for the North now, so the old political tensions have re-emerged.

If, on other hand, the Northern Executive were plied with

money, then the other items on the agenda at the Stormont talks may come to resolution surprisingly fast. Take the issue of historical investigation into past traumas, which is allegedly a sticking point. It was the view of John Hume during his political career that conflicting perspectives of history, and even probing into criminal activity in the recent past, should best be addressed against a backdrop of economic emancipation. When Hume brought that message to the US, it was a message of peace, reconciliation and economic investment. It is a message that endures. Martin McGuinness, who was present during President Bill Clinton's visit to Derry this March, stated on that occasion: "I think for President Clinton to come and to walk across the Peace Bridge with him and Pat [John Hume and his wife] is hugely symbolic." But symbolic of what? Neither Hume throughout his career nor Clinton, when latter became embroiled in trying to solve the Northern Troubles, were in the least bit equivocal about the methods required to do so.

Financial support as a stay against fragmentation in the North is not as crude a solution as it might appear at first glance. Sectarianism in the North has historically been linked to jobbery and to unfairly craving up limited and diminishing spoils. Sam Thompson's drama, *Over the Bridge*, set in the East Belfast's docks and written in 1958, before the Troubles broke out, neatly depicted that Northern Ireland: a place of sectarian outrages where murder sprees were liable to occur when the code of employment allocation along religious lines was flouted. The play expressed an important facet of the underbelly of Northern society and naturally producers did not chomp at the bit to mount the play. One theatre

director distanced himself from the play publicly on the following grounds: "It is the policy of the directors of the Ulster Group Theatre to keep political and religious controversies off our stage." Indeed it was. And, in 1958, money was still too tight to mention, so the issues Thompson depicted in his important drama were determinedly viewed through the lenses of politics and religion.

Yet the economic basis of the rejection of 'the other side' plays a more fundamental role in Northern politics than

tribal politics. Cameron and Kenny's ploy to pummel the North with austerity constitutes an unhistorical view of what the problem is, and of how best to address it. Sooner or later the governments, especially the British one, will have to continue to financially support the North, so they might as well cough up now. The current haggling over the price is as unseemly as it is futile. With the departure of Kenny and Cameron, the talks will likely not see a breakthrough this side of Christmas. Bah, Humbug!

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Maureen O'Looney; Mother to Many

By: Maureen Callahan

The world's population at present is around 7 billion. What difference can one person make one way or the other?

Ask the people who knew Maureen O'Looney best. Helping others and was her forte. She had a huge following and was blessed with many unique gifts which she passed on to friends and strangers. Just talk

to Mary Johnson Gorski.

"She was my best friend for the last 17 years. There were several decades between us, but it didn't matter. I lost my mother rather early. Maureen filled a motherly role for me and a grandmotherly role for my daughter, while being a best friend to our family." The two met in the halls of the Irish American Heritage Center while Mary waited for her daughter at Irish dancing lessons. Maureen asked if Mary could 'help her with a couple things.' "I didn't really know her at the time, but she was an older member of the Irish community, so I didn't want to say no." Good thing, because "helping" (assisting on committees for benefits to help those fallen on hard times) grew into an amazing friendship. "40 benefit committees later, here I am," Mary chuckles. "Maureen changed my life."

Mary goes on to relate about Maureen's charitable work for The Women's Center on Chicago's northwest side. Girls would come in pregnant, frightened, not knowing what to do. The Women's Center offers assistance, both financially and emotionally to these women at a rough time. "We organized the Festival of Life about 6 years ago," Mary relates. Maureen knew that if the women who came in looking for help could see their child on an ultrasound screen, it might change their perspective from fear to empowerment. "We had the fundraiser on a Sunday at the Irish American Heritage Center. We

had so many people, it was amazing. We had several of the major ethnicities represented in Chicago—the Poles, the Filipinos, the Mexicans, etc. I went to the store three different times to buy ham! We had it on a Sunday afternoon. People were lined up out the door and around the corner. These people were so pro-life. By the end, the Women's Center received not one but two ultrasound machines. It was an amazing day." This was the essence of Maureen's power. Mary remembers her fiery get-it-done spirit. "You didn't refuse Maureen. She wouldn't take 'no' for an answer. She got things done."

"Maureen was the kind of friend everyone needs; the type who is always offering encouragement right when you need it. She always knew what you needed before you ever asked for her help. 'Go get it, girl,' she'd always say. 'You can do anything you want.' I went back to culinary school later in life. She was always cheering me on; like a mom. I still hear her voice sometimes when I'm down or things aren't going as I had hoped or planned."

As a little child, Maureen's parents taught her the importance of life. "Never let the sun go down without having done a good turn for someone else," she once told me that her father taught her. "Treat everyone the same — whether they're tinkers or royalty. You can learn from everyone and every life relates somehow to the next." From the information I've gathered, I'm learning that the 'good turn' she spoke of spanned anywhere from \$5 for a friend's gas tank to an entire car. Irish American News publisher, Cliff Carlson, tells this story about Maureen. "I went into her store in the early 1990's, shortly after I had bought the paper, and I told Maureen a simple story about my car being stolen and destroyed. I wasn't looking for anything, just told her the story over a cup of tea! I went home, and no sooner got there, than she called me up and asked me to come back to the store. It was Maureen, so I did!

She had a car out front and wanted me to try it out. It was a clean old Cadillac and it ran great. I came back in, told her I liked it

and wanted to know how much it was. She pulled out the title, signed it, handed me the keys and told me we would work it out later," which we did," says longtime friend Cliff Carlson. "There were times when I didn't visit her store because she would send me home with a bag of goodies if I went in! I remember one Christmas I stayed away, and didn't show up until March! Sure enough, she admonished me for not coming in at Christmas and gave me another bag of stuff! She was always like that! Generous to a fault."

But it wasn't all work and no play, Mary is quick to remind me. "Maureen loved conversation. She talked to everyone. We would go out to the bars or the boats or wherever, and by the time we were leaving at 2 a.m., she knew everyone in the place. She liked to party. And her door was always open. To friends and strangers alike. Longtime friend Peter Brady recalls coming to Chicago for the first time in the 70s as a musician. "Nobody had to go knocking at her door," Peter recalls, "because Maureen would drag you in! My siblings and I stayed with her for 5 or 6 weeks the first time we ever met her. We came back for spells in subsequent years and always stayed with her. Any musician (or anyone else!) who needed a place to stay always knew they had one with her. She would chauffeur us around, show us the whole city. And if she couldn't pick us up, she made sure we knew how to use the CTA. She took care of anyone who needed it." For someone who had only one daughter, she was a mother to so many.

I have a few installments left in the Maureen O'Looney series. I know many of you readers knew her in one way or another. I encourage each and every one of you to contact me with your stories, memories and anecdotes. I promise to reference all of them. I may be reached at misscallahan@hotmail.com. If you prefer to speak via telephone, please call the IAN.

Maureen Callahan is a Chicago writer and frequent contributor to Irish American News.

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The truth is that CIA torture did work, but not the way its defenders claim. It produced what Bush/Cheney wanted, false justifications for their planned war crimes in Iraq and elsewhere.

AMERICANS are being informed about "black sites" in Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, etc. where the CIA tortured to the point of, and sometimes including, death. W. Bush's lawyers, when seeking legal cover for their planned crimes in Guantanamo, cited the ECtHR's verdict (now proven flawed) that Britain's abuse of Irish republican prisoners did not amount to torture. That figleaf disappeared upon proof that Britain had criminally withheld evidence from that court. This forces Ireland to re-sue Britain for those same tortures. Britain always tortured; but how tragic that our once-proud US republic is now so torturer-coddling as to rival old Lord Stormont about whom Benjamin Franklin, in his 12Mar1777 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, wrote: "We transmit you some affidavits, relating to the treatment of our prisoners, with a copy of our letter to Lord Stormont, communicating them, and his insolent answer." Franklin was responding largely to the 11,500 deaths in 1776 of Britain's American POWs who, after refusing to switch sides, died in British prison hulks in New York's East River. The sacred remains of Stormont's victims are collected in a massive vault surmounted by the Ships Martyrs Monument in Brooklyn's Ft. Greene Park cemetery near the hulks's anchorages.

IF ENOUGH OF US perform our civic duties we will restore our U.S. republic, so let's do it. It'll be harder for the Brits, permanent subjects of a squalid empire. Still, greater percentages of Brits marched against Blair's war crimes than did American opponents of Bush's/Obama's ones.

THE GFA'S RESULTS are undeniable. Occupied Ireland's post-1969 combatants, republicans and Loyalists, have been polled as to who achieved their goals. It's unanimous: Loyalists achieved their goals. Republicans agree that the Loyalists and Brits achieved their goals; that republicanism was lost. The GFA surrendered the Six-Counties to Britain. GFA promoters claim that the late Rev. Ian Paisley had mellowed. He had; his dream was achieved; re-subjugation of his "God-Cursed Romanists." Meanwhile, the British perpetrators of Bloody Sunday, of Ballymurphy, Loughinisland, McGurk's Pub, the Dublin/Monaghan and Omagh car bombings, the Miami Show Band massacre, etc., and the UVF's drive-by shootings of some 700 Catholics

For The Republic



Chris Fogarty

were never prosecuted. "Ireland's" gov't refuses to prosecute them. Imprisonment (of republicans) without trial is back; so is torture and abuse. Meanwhile my wife mailed Christmas cards to ninety-nine republican POWs (each card signed by scores of Chicagoan well-wishers); framed for crimes far less abominable than the above-mentioned massacres perpetrated and immunized by the Brits. The main lie of GFA promoters is that it "ended the violence." But violence remains rampant; in Maghaberry prison against republicans. The homicide rate peaked (at 472) in 1972 and had dropped to 69 by 1984, fourteen years prior to the GFA. There is no reason to think that its decline rate would stop or slow. So when confronted by the lie that the GFA ended the violence remember that British violence continues and that homicides peaked in 1972, twenty-six years prior to the 1998 GFA. We all have a duty to speak up, to contradict the lies that underpin State crime.

THE CRAIGAVON 2 Last May a joke began circulating regarding Belfast's Court of Appeal. It goes: "What do you call a blind alcoholic with mental health issues?" Answer: "An ideal eyewitness for the state." Like many "justice" jokes it has a deadly edge. Nobody feels this edge more than John Paul Wootton and Brendan McConville, the "Craigavon 2." Previously sentenced to Life Without Parole, they had just lost their appeal due largely to testimony of a legally blind, mentally troubled alcoholic known in the community as a Walter Mitty, a fabulist.

A year after the fact this "witness" contacted the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The State rewarded him and offered him a new life out of the dire one he lived (as it did life-long criminal and MI5/FBI agent David Rupert after participating in Omagh and the framing of Michael McKeivitt).

John Paul and Brendan remain true republicans. They reject the lies and the sell-out. They proudly speak out for justice and an end to British rule in Ireland, just like the majority of citizens living there. The difference between these two men and many others is that they eschewed whispering. They speak out forthrightly. A non-jury court system, without substantive evidence, framed them for murder



and sentenced them to life imprisonment. This travesty shames us all. The brutalization of both men in one of Her Majesty's Irish Prisons is trumpeted by Britain's media to terrorize other republicans into submission.

PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY. Critics of Syria, Egypt, etc., must learn about British rule in Ireland. Let's ignore Adams and the sell-out. Let's swallow our fears and confront these British crimes, knowing that "Ireland's" gov't abetted MI5/FBI's frame-

up of Michael McKeivitt while it covered up their Omagh massacre. Its Consuls General actively opposed the MacBride Principles, Joe Doherty, and the Birmingham Six, etc. Finally it abetted the banksters against Ireland itself. Let's exercise our Constitutional freedoms by reviving Irish-America's traditional role of supporter, advocate, and funder of Irish justice and freedom. Engage against this miscarriage; participate. Google justiceforthecraigavontwo.com. Please contact the Craigavon 2 campaign group. Let's support the Craigavon 2. Ditto Michael McKeivitt. Contact 312/664-7651 or Fogartyc@att.net Home from re-hab!

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Look of the Lass

Continued from page 13

ing the South Side Irish Parade Fundraiser Party on Saturday, February 21st. Or, how about you girls on the North Side! Join in on the fun at The Irish American Heritage Center for their

Queen Contest! The winners of these two events will then be sponsored by The South Side Irish and The Irish American Heritage Center and compete in the Chicago Rose Selection to be held at Gaelic Park on Sunday, March 22nd! Ladies, you will not want to miss this opportunity to

throw on a sash and represent your favorite business. You could be the next Chicago Rose! The 2015 Chicago Rose will then head off to Ireland in May to represent our fine City in the International Rose of Tralee Festival Regionals. This is truly an experience of a lifetime! Hop on to our website

at www.chicagoroseoftralee.com to fill out a preliminary free application and to find out more information. There will be only 40 ladies able to enter the Chicago Preliminary Selection, so hurry; you do not want to miss your chance. The Roses will need to be 18 by January 1, 2015 and

cannot be over 27 by September 1, 2015. We are also looking for Rose-Petals Debutantes; they are between the ages of 13-17. And, of course, our youngest girls, the Rose-Buds, who are between the ages of 5-12. Get your party dresses ready girls!

The Rose of Tralee is always looking for Major Sponsors to keep this wonderful organization going strong. So, please if you are interested in advertising your business or sponsoring a Rose in any way, go to our website or call Mary Kay Gavin-Marmo 773-729-0811. See you in March at the Parades and Parties!

Woodland Trust: Northern Ireland

A Centenary Wood in Northern Ireland's beautiful Faughan Valley is springing to life thanks to local people and visitors who rallied to plant the first of 40,000



native trees this November. Part of the Woodland Trust's Centenary Woods project, 'Brackfield Wood' is one of just four flagship woods being created throughout the UK to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War. The trees planted at Brackfield will be a living, lasting tribute to the people from the island of Ireland who played a part in the war.

Find out about the Trust's Centenary Woods project at www.woodlandtrust.org

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Willis Clan in Concert



The Center presents rising stars of Irish, folk and country music with The Willis Clan in concert this winter. This family of young musicians, aged 4-22, continue to wow audiences from the Grand Ole Opry to Milwaukee Irish Fest.

Parents Brenda and Toby and their 12 home-schooled children are a family of musicians, dancers, athletes, artists and writers living near Nashville, Tennessee. The Willis Clan was featured this past season on *America's Got Talent* on NBC.

Living on the South side of Chicago, Brenda and Toby Willis were surrounded by Irish culture. Their children began taking Irish music and dance lessons, but events soon happened that rocked the Willis family, and they decided to leave Chicago and move to Nashville. The Willis children continued Irish dancing and soon began winning competitions, including eight National

Championships in Swing Dance.

Meanwhile, the music training continued, and like their dance, it branched out into different genres. The Willis children learned pop, country, bluegrass and jazz. But they never stopped playing Irish music. In 2012, the Willis kids won The Fleadh Cheoil, the World's Championship in Irish Music in Cavan, Ireland.

In addition to music and dance, the boys have won 10 State Wrestling Championships, the girls are accomplished horseback riders, and all are artists, writers and athletes.

Don't miss this night of music and dance from tomorrow's stars of Irish music.

The Willis Clan in concert is Friday, January 23, 2015 at 8pm. Tickets are \$20 for IAHC members, \$25 for general admission and \$12 for children 12 and under. To purchase tickets, call 773-282-7035, ext. 10 or visit www.irish-american.org.

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Tickets go on sale on January 5. To purchase, visit www.irish-american.org, call 773-282-7035 or visit the IAHC Office or Gift Shop.

There is no fee for tickets purchased online!



Wearing of the Green Dinner Dance

March is practically St. Patrick's Month at the Center and what better way to celebrate in style with the eighth annual Wearing of the Green Dinner Dance. This dance kicks off a month St. Patrick's Day activities at the Center.

Festivities include dancing, live music with Gerry Haughey, a sit-down dinner catered by Harrington's Catering, spot prizes and a raffle. The menu



includes corned beef and cabbage, chicken entrees and more. There will be a cash bar available.

The dance is Sunday, March 1, 2015 from 5 to 10pm and tickets are \$40. Reservations must be made by February 28 online at www.irish-american.org or by calling the Center office at 773-282-7035.

St. Brigid's Day Celebration

Celtic Women hosts its annual St. Brigid's Day Celebration this winter.

Learn more about this early Irish saint and the ancient Celtic goddess who predated her.

St. Brigid is one of the most venerated saints in Ireland, with churches and holy wells named for her all over Ireland. This multimedia



program includes history, poetry, music, favorite stories, reflections and readings.

The St. Brigid's Day Celebration is Saturday, January 31 from 1pm to 4:30pm. Tickets are \$10 for IAHC or CWI members and \$15 for general admission and can be purchased at the door.



THE HERITAGE LINE

Irish American heritage center

Chicago, Illinois



WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

President's Message

Dear Members and Friends,

Many decades ago and still to a certain degree, the idea of an Irish American Heritage Center in Chicago was a **DREAM**. For so long, there was the dream and it was all about the dream. And, then thanks to so many, the dream became a reality.

Now, while there is still dreaming to be done, the reality is, it is also about the **GREEN**.

The reality is that the **DREAM** requires **GREEN**. Simply put, that is **REALITY** and there is no escaping that. It takes **GREEN** to fund the Center dream.

As President, I have accepted that challenge and am working daily to pursue programs and opportunities to address the **GREEN**. I realize it is not always popular to ask for people to give but it is what I, **AND WE** need to do. A key responsibility of the President is to ensure the Center is on solid financial ground, is well capitalized, has ample working capital and enough support to fulfill the mission.

Our Center requires hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars a year just to cover the most basic operation costs of utilities, cleaning, staff, snow removal, programming and the like. The building structure also requires significant dollars for repairs and renovations. While over the past 3 1/2 years, we have made strides in cost control, cost elimination and accountability, transparency, technology and sustainability, the proper funding of the Center remains an enormous and ongoing task. The task requires more than \$1,000,000 a year to fund the operations, building, events and programming.

The tasks are clear, and the need is great. The cultural mission and the building must have proper funding and ongoing revenue sources.

As we move into the new year of 2015, I am committed to a realistic, documented, transparent and business-like approach to address the revenue and attraction of donations. We are moving in that direction with the programs in development as well as those now in place.

• **BACK TO THE FUTURE** with a \$3 million goal to establish an escrow for Capital Improvements

• Annual Appeal to help fund operations

• Raffle ticket sales with a goal increased to 1500 from 500

• Grant Writer hired to pursue local, state, federal and government grants

• Sponsorship Chair search for a special one to consolidate all opportunities

• Fundraising/Advancement Chair search for a special one to help us raise funds

• Website donation opportunities

• "Planned Giving" program

• Email Blast solicitations (#GivingTuesday), with our website operating this past December 31 until midnight to accept 2014 donations

• Strategic and Master Plan

In June 2015, just six short months from now, you will be asked to nominate and elect new board members, and a new President and Executive Officers. I ask you to take this responsibility seriously. Let's together start now to look to seat great supporters of the above plans and programs. I trust the four years I have served the Center as President will provide my successor an opportunity to continue to move forward.

Finally, I would like to share with you my New Year's resolutions for the Center:

1) Elect a 2015 professional, qualified, dedicated board and executive team that will personally support the Center with time and financial contributions.

2) Fund the **BACK TO THE FUTURE PLEDGE** program to provide for ample capital improvement funds to maintain the building.

3) Programs, events and more implemented to significantly grow the Center membership of young adults, families and children and increase attendance at all Center events.



4) A clearly defined, documented, prioritized, timed, budgeted, transparent and member-supported building plan that board approved for environmental sustainability, maintenance, repair and renovation projects.

5) Recognition by all staff, members, committee chairs and event chairs of the importance of operating the Center as a business and one that embraces cash flow management, expense reduction and revenue growth to provide ample funds to fund the mission.

6) All staff, members, committee chairs and event chairs continue to search out and use available data in decision making, thereby making better and more informed decisions by reducing reliance on any personal or individual emotions or limited interests.

7) Increase the volunteer base and properly thank those volunteers and volunteer leaders who give so much of themselves.

8) Full support of risk management programs, processes and more that protect the Center short, medium and longer term.

9) Development of a time defined, "sense of urgency" to implement what needs to be done.

10) Stay true to the mission as we serve our members, partners, customers and community.

Happy New Year!

John Crowley Gorski
President

Annual Volunteer Party

In appreciation for all the hard work our volunteers do for, we will hold our Annual IAHC Volunteer cocktail party and buffet dinner on Saturday, January 31 from 6-10pm in the Erin Room. Cocktails will be served from 6-6:45pm and dinner is at 7pm.

Volunteers who have worked for a minimum of one Center-sponsored event or committee during 2014 are invited to the party and may bring a spouse, or a guest.

Eligible events include Building Committee, iBAM!, Irish American Hall of Fame, Irish Fest, St Patrick's Festival, Library, Cultural Committee, Irish Heritage Singers, Nimble Thimbles, Museum, Art Gallery, Archives, Art Gallery, Finance, Breakfasts, Events, Department, General Office, Grand Raffle and the Back to the Future Kick Off fundraiser.

To RSVP, call the Center office at 773-282-7035, ext. 10 before January 28 or email carmelokane@irishahc.org.

We strongly encourage all volunteers to become members. To join or for membership questions, visit www.irish-american.org, call 773-282-7035 ext. 10 or stop by the Center office or Gift Shop.

Our next large events where you can get involved are our St. Patrick's Day Celebrations. Want to lend a hand? Send an email to Carmel O'Kane at the email address above.

Annual Appeal

The IAHC Annual Appeal continues. Each year at this time, we ask our members and friends to help the Center by making a donation. Your donation is very important to the operation and mission of the Center. We thank you for your contributions, past and present, and urge you to think of us for your planned giving. We are working hard to preserve Irish heritage and provide our members and friends with the events and programming you have come to expect from us.

Your contribution will be enhanced once again by the matching program offered by Pat and Peggy Burke. We thank Pat and Peggy for their continued generosity.

All gifts made to the Annual Appeal are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law.

Help us continue to make the Center a special place in Chicago. Our children and grandchildren and all who follow after us deserve to enjoy and experience the Center as we have.

The names below are contributors from November 14 through December 12, 2014. We will list donor names through March 2015.

FRIEND (\$1-\$99)

Broderick, Carol A.
Clarke, John and Katie
Connolly, Matina
Dixon, Arthur F.
Erskine, Michael and Ann
Fraser, Patricia, in memory of Patricia H. Fraser
Geraghty, Ann and Jim
Hunt, Larry
Kane, Margaret
Sullivan, Patricia
Thiel, Martha
Viglione, Bridget
Zalinski, Jim and Mary Ann, in memory of Maurice J. Foran
Breen-Greco, Ann

ADVOCATE (\$100-\$249)

Barrett, Sheila and Edward
Boyle, Josephine and Tom
Casey, Bill and Margaret
Chambers, John
Conneely, Coleman and Sally
Dooley, Timothy J.
Fahy, Thomas and Dorothy
Flaherty, Patrick F.
Lally, Michael and Marie C.
Laurino, Alderman Margaret
Maxwell, John
Schroeder, Geri

PATRON (\$250-\$499)

Monahan, Mary Ellen
Sheehan, Jeanine

CENTER CHAMPION (\$1000-\$2499)

Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee
Denihan, Jack and Mary Jane, in memory of Daniel Joseph Denihan

Get Engaged over the Holidays?

Have your special day at the Irish American Heritage Center



To rent our space for your wedding, call our Events Department at 773-282-7035, ext. 21.

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THE HERITAGE LINE

Irish American Heritage Center

Chicago, Illinois



WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

January 2015

January 2	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili Mor	Fifth Province	8pm
January 3	Shamrock American Club Card Party	Sham Amer Room	8pm
January 9	Salon Concert	Fifth Province	8pm
January 10	St. Patrick's Fathers Dance	Fifth Province	8pm
January 16	Quiz Night	Room 109	8pm
	Shamrock American Club Meeting	Sham Amer Room	7pm
January 17	Roscommon Club Social	Room 309	8pm
January 21	Tara Club Senior Meeting	Room 304	10am
	Celtic Women International Meeting	Room 304	7:30pm
January 23	Willis Clan Concert	Auditorium	8pm
January 24	Cash For Kids Johnny Cash Festival	Auditorium & FP	6pm
January 25	Library Book Club: <i>The Guts</i> , by Roddy Doyle	Library	1pm
	Genealogy Meeting	Library	1pm
January 31	St. Brigid's Day Celebration	Room 111	1pm

Regularly Scheduled Events

Tues	Set Dancing	Room 111	7:30-9:30pm
Tues	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	9am-Noon
Tues, Thurs, Fri, & Sat	Golden Diners Lunch Program	Kitchen	12:30pm-2pm
Wed	Nimble Thimbles	Room 208	7-10pm
Thurs	Irish Heritage Singers Rehearsals	Room 304	7pm
Fri	Francis O'Neill Club Ceili	Room 111	8pm

BECOME A MEMBER

Chicago boasts one of the finest Irish Centers in the world. Become a part of it. Running, maintaining and upgrading the Center is a big job that takes big commitment. Your membership helps make the Center happen.

To join call 773-282-7035 x10, visit www.

irish-american.org, or fill out the form below. Send payment to:

The Irish American Heritage Center Membership
4626 N. Knox Avenue
Chicago, IL 60630

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Credit Card # _____

Exp _____ 3 Digit code on card's back: _____

ANNUAL DUES

Individual Membership

\$30/year or \$50/2 years

Family Membership

\$40/year or \$60/2 years

\$250 - Harper

3-year membership -no annual dues

\$500 - Bard

5-year membership -no annual dues

\$1,000 - Chieftain

10-year membership -no annual dues

\$2,500 - High King

25-year membership -no annual dues

\$5,000 - Saint

Lifetime

membership

-no annual dues



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For updates on upcoming events and ticket giveaways

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Irish American Heritage Center

JANUARY ENTERTAINMENT

1/2	Ceili Mor
1/3	Cirrus Falcon
1/9	Salon Concert
1/10	St. Patrick's Fathers
1/16	Joe McShane
1/17	The Dooley Brothers
1/23	The Boils
1/24	Cash for Kids, 6pm
1/30	In Spite of Ourselves
1/31	RicoQuinn

All Shows Start After 9pm



Drop by for the very best in traditional and modern Irish music.

Pub food is served from 6pm-10pm.

January Drink Special
SoCo Cherry Cokes \$4

January Food Special
Shepherd's Pie \$8.75

Valid for the month of January 2015 only.

Annual Raffle

Our Annual Raffle continues in 2015. We had our first pre-grand prize drawing at the Christmas Bazaar and the lucky winners of \$1000 were Patricia and Dan O'Malley.

Only 1,500 tickets will be sold for our grand drawing in July with a chance to win as much as \$30,000. Before then you will have multiple chances to win \$1,000 at the pre-grand prize drawings listed below.

Any \$1,000 "Pre-Grand prize" winning tickets are returned to the drum and are eligible for other \$1,000 drawings, as well as the Grand Prize drawing. All drawings will take place at the Center.

DRAWING	DATE	PRIZE(S)
St. Patrick's Festival	March 14, 2015	\$ 1,000
IAHC Open House	April 2, 2015	\$ 1,000
Irish Fest	July 12, 2015	1st \$30,000 2nd \$10,000 3rd \$ 5,000

You need not be present to win, but if you are, you can win a special \$250 attendance bonus, in addition to the drawing prize.

Tickets can be purchased in the IAHC Office, Gift Shop or at www.irish-american.org.

The Heritage Line Staff Kathleen O'Neill, Editor

Contributors: Shelby Baron, Theresa Choske, Mike Frericks, John Gorski, Catherine Kelly, Kathy Kelly, Natalie Miller, Mary Morris, Sheila Murphy, Carmel O'Kane, and Maureen Smith

4626 N. Knox Ave., Chicago, IL 60630 • 773-282-7035



THE HERITAGE LINE

Irish American heritage center

Chicago, Illinois



WWW.IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

News You Can Use

Chicago Horse

Those who attended the Christmas Bazaar saw one of the newest donation additions to the Center. Thanks to the Gainer family, the Center will have the Irish-themed Chicago horse on display in the second floor hallway. The Horses of Honor is a public art installation benefiting the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation. This project features life-size statues of Chicago's Police Horses that are artistically and individually produced and designed by local Chicago artists. Each Horse is named after a fallen hero of the CPD.

Walk of Names

The Center is now accepting orders for summer installation of personalized bricks. Visit www.irish-american.org to order or stop in the Gift Shop or Main Office.

Welcome Catherine Kelly

Mary Griffin recently retired, and we wish her the best. Catherine Kelly has joined our staff in the Main Office. Please welcome Catherine.

Heritage Line Newsletter

The quarterly *Heritage Line* newsletter is back. Members should have received their copy. If you have not received yours, check with membership to join or renew your membership. Renew or join online or stop by the Gift Shop or Main Office to sign up or renew your membership.

Help Wanted

We seek a few good men and women as volunteers to lead important initiatives, including sponsorship and fundraising/advancement. If you are interested, email John Gorski at jhgorski@sbcglobal.net.

We seek a:

- Sponsorship Chair
- Fundraising/Advancement Chair

Donations Needed

The Center is appreciative of the donations we receive. As we move forward with promotion of our brand and serving our members and customers, we are looking for some key donations:

- Outdoor LED sign
- Indoor LED message board

Membership

By now, members should have received renewal information. You can renew or join online, by phone or stop by the Main Office or Gift Shop.

Events Ticketing

Did you know you can purchase tickets to all of our events with no hidden ticketing fee? Visit our website at www.irish-american.org to see what's in store for 2015.

Did You Know?

The beautiful IAHC Library is located on the second floor and contains a large selection of Irish multimedia materials. This includes books on

Irish history, biographies, plays, poetry, music, art, fiction, magazines, CD's, a large collection of books in the Irish language, a genealogy collection and a large archival section with books dating back to the 1850s.

We host lectures and a Great Irish Book Club. We are a circulating library for IAHC members and are staffed by helpful volunteers. We appreciate the book donations that add to our collection and assist in maintaining the library. We have scheduled hours and special appointments can be made to do research. The library includes a large reading room and a children's room.

Library Hours

Mondays CLOSED
Tuesdays and Thursdays 10-2pm
Wednesday 4pm to 8pm
Friday closed
Saturday 9-3pm

Sunday, CLOSED except the last Sunday in July and August, for genealogy-hours: Noon to 3pm

Back to the Future Capital Campaign

Our Back to the Future Capital Campaign continues. The goal of this ongoing campaign is to gather the community to help us raise funds for our Capital Campaign, which benefits much-needed capital necessities and improvements. The improvement projects also help us better address our cultural mission as we serve our members and guests.

At our September event, we introduced the

Back to the Future pledge and stock offering program, with a goal of \$3 million. The project offers donors an opportunity to make a generous contribution to the Center to be spread over an extended period of time.

For every \$100 you pledge, you will receive one share of non-equity stock in the Irish American Heritage Center. Stockholders will be welcomed at the Annual Stockholders' Meeting, receive regular updates on the progress of the goal and the projects

being completed with the funds collected.

If you have not had the opportunity to pledge, please join us as we travel together BACK TO THE FUTURE. The names below are donors who have pledged through December 12.

Thank you for your generosity and support. The Center is a 501c3 non profit and gifts are tax-deductible as the law allows. We will run this list monthly to honor and thank you for your support.

To pledge, call the office at 773-282-7035 or visit www.irish-american.org.

UNDER \$499

Anonymous (4)
Margaret M. Roppolo
Thomas W. Hamilton
Mary McMahan Mullen
Marquette Properties, Inc
Sheila M. Finley
William and Margaret Fallon
Mary Kane
Madeline Moriarty
Belinda B. Fergus
James Corboy
Sheila Coyle
Maureen B. Coyle
Tim and Maureen Richardson
State Representative John D'Amico
Frances E McPartlin
Mary E. Finnegan
William M. Casey
Kurt and Joanne Hoffman
Daniel and Eileen Healy
Hillview Custom Homes Inc
Patrick McGovern
Ann Lynch
Eileen E. Sheridan
Thomas W. O'Brien
Kathleen Gillespie
John Russell

Timothy S. Laughlin
Alena Bridget Murphy Harrison
Mary P. Mahoney
Judy A. Dunleavy
Patrick T. Conroy
John Cosgrove
James F. Flynn
Thomas and Mary Mulkerriens
Jim McGrath
Trista Barrett
Noreen A. Scollard
Karen L. Grant
Tom and Margaret Reid
Evelyn Staunton
Paul and Penny Milnamow
Margaret Coyle
Jim and Pauline Scollard
Brenda Ryan
M. Frances Fitzgerald
Daniel M. Waadt
Agnes Mahoney
Richard Locke
Mark A. Bailey
A's Restaurant and Pancake House
John Crilly
Tom O'Mahony
John and Mary Griffin
Marguerite T. Mullen

Arthur and Florence Hurter
Mary Beth and Sheila Crowley
Frank and Loretta Gagliardi
Michael and Barbara Glynn
John and Madelen Gollgoly
Pat and Nora Lynch
Noreen Brennan
Mary O'Looney
Mary and Alan Avery
Jerry and Diana Binder
Robert F. O'Connor
Jane Kramer and Paul Giblin
Art Johns
Ann and Jim Geraghty
Jean A. Kennedy
P.J. and Mary O'Dea
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Mulcrone
Pat O'Connor
Michael P. Atkins and Monica Reardon-Atkins
Edward C. and Mary Cox
Michael and Mary Jane Mangan
D. B. Boyle
Thomas and Nora Heneghan
Thomas and Mary Ann O'Kane
Maureen A. McKemey
Jeffrey and Catherine Keating
Annie F'rench

Mary and Michael Cremins
Mary Kane
Joseph and Mary Keleghan
Thomas and Norah McMorrow
David and Noreen Schulz
Margaret Cooney
Eileen Sullivan
Mary Catherine Hogan
Mike and Una Geraghty
Pamela Taylor
John Grady
Pat Rose McGuire
Jennifer Buxton
Brigid Madden
Michael Donoghue
Veronica Carroll Norton
Bridget T. Hurst
John and Anna Burgess
David Fredin
Mary Ellen Johnston
John F. Mulcrone
Margaret Folan
Michael and Natalie Connolly and Family
Francis and Mary Duffy
Mr. and Mrs. P. Moran
James Fahey
Frank McCrudden

Wayne F. Kern
Margaret M. Fric
Thomas and Mary O'Malley
Thomas and Joan Kean
Patrick J. Connolly
Robert M. Healy and Peg O'Herron
Thomas E. Mulvihill
Kathleen Kelly
Annabell V. O'Malley
Martin and Alice M. Dungan
James Farrell
Brother Michael Flaherty, FSC
Mary Catherine Hogan
Kathleen O'Regan, in memory of Tom O'Regan
Mr. and Mrs. James P. Mostyn
John and Mary O'Shea
Kathleen and Mark Madden
Marianne McGlynn
Brigid Gerace
Cliff Carlson
Mary Jane Crowe
Mike Neary
John and Anna Patricia D'Alessandro
James F. Moriarty
Edward and Mary Ellen Mellon
Robert & Cyrilla Finnegan

Dermot and Betty Edgecombe
\$500 - \$999
Anonymous
Ann Moran, in memory of Kevin Moran
The Hughes Family
Daniel J. Harnett
Mary Kelly
John T. McEnroe
Sheila and Terry McGovern
Kathleen Brady-Murfin
Trudy and Michael Kelly and Family
Mike Kelly in memory of Bill "Bubba" Forkell
Ann McGarrigle
\$1000 - \$4999
Paddy Homan and Kathleen O'Connor
Gloria and Bill Sedlacek
Rev. James O'Brien
Bob and Mary Ann Sheehan
Margaret M. McMahon
Unforgettable Edibles Catering
John P. Madden
Mary P. Carr
Thomas G. Fleming
John and Donna Quirk
Burns Family Charitable Foundation
Mary Ann Smalley
Shamrock American Club
Vincent and Cathleen Walsh
Michael Noonan
Daniel Creaney
Noel and Bridget Murtagh
\$5000-\$9,999
Carmel K. O'Kane
Ann I. Moran
Jeanine M. Sheehan
Jim and Janet Fennerty
Pat Flaherty
Michael and Carolyn Moran
\$10,000 and Over
John and Mary Gorski

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THE 2015 IRISH WEDDING SECTION

Phillip and Amy (Cunneen) Allman

Philip Allman proposed to Amy Cunneen on September 2012, on the famous Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland. They were married at Abbeyleix Church and had the reception in Castle Durrrow, Co Offaly. Phillip is an Illinois native, working as a business analyst. Amy was born in Dublin and is a Director of Finance.



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Photo by Cathy Curry Carlson

Jose and Caitlin (McGill) Balanos

Caitlin and Jose met while attending Texas A&M. Caitlin is the daughter of Carol (Curry) McGill, an 8th grade math teacher, and WGN Chicago weatherman Tim McGill.

Jose is from Guatemala, his parents Ana and Rafael were very involved in the wedding plans. The couple were married May 24, 2014 in Antigua Guatemala. "The internet

was invaluable" admits Carol. "Because Jose's parents live in Guat, they were our " on the ground force". Caitlin would look up places and then Ana and Rafael would go see them in person. Caitlin went to Guat. in November for one of her (soon-to-be) sister-in-law's wedding so then she could then make decisions in person ."



(Photos by Jill Devries)

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Aaron Michael and Katharine Mary (Mutert) Kerr

Katharine Mary Kerr (Mutert) and Aaron Michael were engaged March 15th during the St Pats parade in Rockford Illinois. They were married August 9, 2014. Aaron is a director at Fitzgerald Funeral Home in Rockford, as well

as a bagpiper in the northern illinois area. Kate, is a project manager at her family owned and operated company, Franklin Display Group, in Belvidere IL, originally based out of Franklin Park. Their 4 yr old is Keiran George.



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Brian and Teresa (Shine) DeVan

Brian and Teresa both hail from up the southside of Chicago. Brian grew up in Saint Symphorosa and Teresa in St. Bedes: very close to each other. It was on Christmas eve of last year, 2013, that Brian proposed.

“He actually came to the church (where I had a Christmas eve job playing piano) to propose after the mass. It was very special“, Teresa reminisces. “Brian is a Chicago police

sergeant on the South side of Chicago and I am currently teaching Irish music classes at the Old Town School of Folk music and Chicago Gaelic Park and performing as a musician with different gigs. So our work backgrounds are like night and day, but we enjoy a similar schedule so that really works

well and we definitely have a fair share of interesting stories!” The couple were married on a wet August 28, 2014 in St. Symphorosa Catholic Church, the reception was held at Chief O’Neill’s Pub in Chicago.

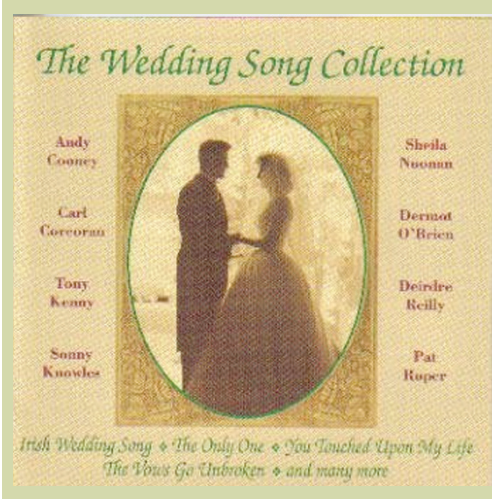
Photographs by Brad Tamarro of Photo Stories Inc



The Wedding Song Collection

By far the best selling Irish Wedding Album of all time is The

Wedding Song Collection by Rego Irish Records CD-R-301 <http://regorecords.com/wed-soncol.html> It is a various artist compilation CD. The track – The Irish Wedding Song is sung by Andy Cooney and was produced by famed record producer Paddy Noonan. Of special note the gorgeous wedding photo Rego Records chose to be the cover image back in 1993 is one of Andy’s parents on their wedding day.





Mick and Mai (Hernon) McEvilley

By *Ryanne Gallagher Johnson*



Mick McEvilley fell in love with his future wife's beautiful and moving voice long before he met her, or even saw her face for the first time. Having heard a song of hers on an Irish radio station in the U.S. in 2000, he jumped through a few hoops to get his hands on her email address, and wrote her asking for a copy of her CD.

Mai, who is an Irish native, and was living and performing in Ireland at the time, was at first dismissive of the American's request, and didn't respond to him. Luckily, Mick was persistent, and emailed once again a few months later, outlining the lengths he'd had to go through just to find her email address in the first place (something that wasn't as common fourteen years ago as it is today, and certainly not something that Mai bothered with very much at the time). He asked her once again if she would send him her CD, and this time Mai, feeling guilty for her initial brush-off, responded with a hand-written letter, and included the album that Mick had gone to such great lengths to acquire.

This initial (and somewhat serendipitous) introduction eventually lead to a wonderful friendship over the next few years. For Mick, it seems the love has been growing from the start, as he admits, "I kind of fell in love as soon as I saw her."

And in 2004, during one of his many trips to Ireland, he decided to move things toward a more serious courtship. "I think I was the only person in love during the first year we met, but I went over (to Ireland), and she offered to let me use her home as a base of operations, and I planned all these things that I thought she would like (such as acquiring tickets to Andrea Bocelli-

a favorite of Mai's). We had a great three weeks together, and we went on from there. I think I made 16 trips to Ireland, and she came over here a few times, and then eventually..."

Eventually, Mai decided that it was time to spend some real time in the States and see if she could hack it as a transplant in America. "The longest I'd spent here was three weeks, so I decided to stay four weeks and see how that went," she says of her first real try at life over here.

Apparently, it agreed with her, because she and Mick became officially engaged in 2012, and married on Cinco de Mayo (May 5) of 2013 at the Irish Heritage Center in Cincinnati.

Of the large difference between Irish and American wedding traditions, Mai says, "I found it to be very odd over here. We have a long wedding at home... you know, you go to the church and there's photographs, and there's a big meal, and then afterwards there's a lot of dancing and everything. And (here) our wedding was all finished at eight o'clock at night, and I was kind of sitting there wondering 'what the hell is happening? Everybody has gone home!'. (In Ireland), that's when it really starts, and it goes on until two or three in the morning, and you have all the musicians playing, and you have singing and dancing. It'd different here. I was kind of disappointed, in a way, but people had to go to work the next day... I always tease Mick that someday we go over and we get married in Ireland as well."

But the differences in culture haven't harmed their marriage. It's all about adjustment. Moving here marrying a man from another

country, she says, "You have to give yourself two or three years to adjust. For instance, the food is sugar-laden here, it's very easy for me to put on weight, so I have to be careful what I eat now. And culturally, the way I think and the way people here think is totally different. Even people going out early and coming home early is kind of weird to me."

While she's settling into married life in the U.S., Mai does miss certain aspects of Ireland, especially her grown children, her family, and her musical friends. And, perhaps odd-sounding to Americans, potatoes and cabbage, which she says are different than what they have in Ireland.

A good way that Mai and Mick have found to connect, in spite of cultural and epicurean differences, is through music. Mai, who is from the village of Gurteen, south Sligo,

Ireland, has been singing and dancing most of her life. She's been a member of the band Dillis, and is now a member of the four-woman band, Beeswing. She's released three albums, has toured on two continents, is an accomplished Banjola player, and teaches traditional singing. Mick, an Ohio native and lawyer by day, plays the guitar in a duo called The Wood Pickers, and has a few other bands he plays with. Together, Mai and Mick make up the two-person band Celtic Font, which has made the tour rounds in the U.S.

Along with her music work, both solo and with Mick, Mai is hoping to set up a tour company to Ireland in the near future. "People have been asking me would I set (a tour company) up and bring them over, because I would know all the local spots that wouldn't be in travel brochures, so I'm working on that."

Ed and Rita McElroy

Ed and Rita were married May 7, 1955 The photo was taken at a brunch following the wedding ceremony held at Morrison Hotel, downtown Chicago. The reception was also held at the Morrison later in the evening Left to Right: Former Secretary of State Charles F. Carpentier, Ed McElroy, Rita McElroy, Former Mayor Richard J. Daley, and Former Chicago Police Commissioner Timothy J. O'Connor





Craig and Rebekah (Nowak) Gavril



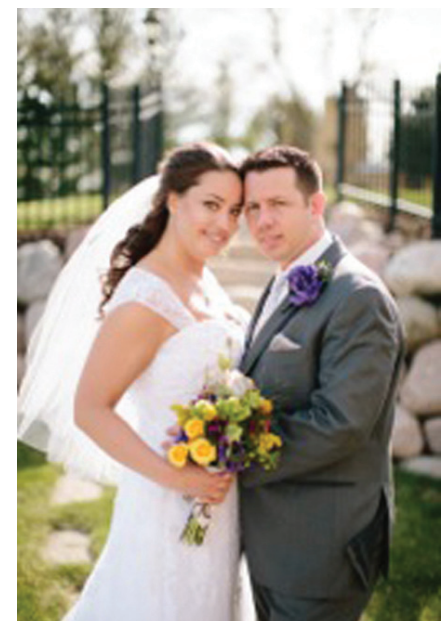
Craig and Rebekah Gavril were married on May 3, 2014 at The Pavilion at Orchard Ridge Farms in Rockton, IL. The couple are residents of the Chicagoland area. They wanted to give a country twist to their spring wed-

ding with some subtle hints of their Irish heritage. Craig and Rebekah met at the 25th anniversary of the Pipes and Drums of The Emerald Society on September of 2007 and were engaged 6 years later with an Emerald engagement ring.

“When the introductions took place, we were so happy to walk into The Pavilion as the new couple. Love and encouragement filled our hearts as cheers and applause filled the high ceiling room as the giant wooden doors opened. Cake cutting and speeches shared laughs and even some tears. The first dances lead way to a packed dance floors. Colorful lights moved around the room changing the atmosphere from a powerful wood built room to an epic party to share the commitment of the joining of two families.

Till there was a silence as the house lights faded and a green glow filled the air. A lone bag piper marched proudly down the aisle. This soloist filled the air with the mighty sounds of the pipes. Just as the all the rooms focus was on this single bag piper a powerful bass drum begins beating behind the large wooden doors. As these

doors open, the commanding sound of a band of pipes and drummers demands the attention of all in the room, only to be overcome by the standing ovation of our guests. This was truly a sight to hear and see.”





Micheal J and Ashley McCusker



Micheal is from Co. Derry. He married "a lovely sweet girl from St. Louis Missouri," on 09/27/2014. "Our cake represents me leaving the farm in Ireland and traveling to St. Louis and meeting Ashley. We actually own the same tractor in Ireland."



Wedding Creativo

An Irish Wedding at the Irish American Heritage Center (above) in Chicago is always great craic!



Harpist
Lillian Reasor

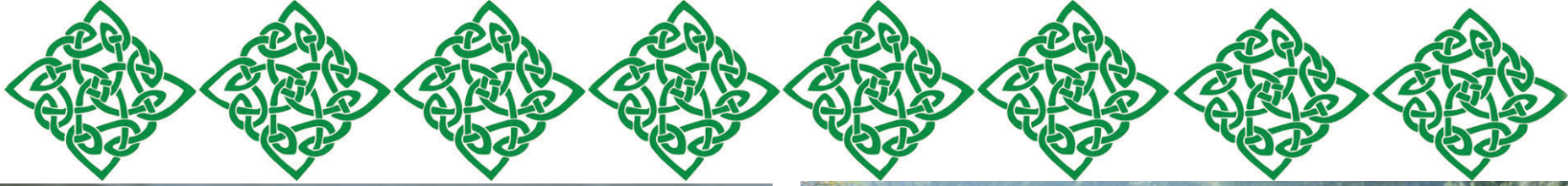
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your ceremony
and reception.



Lreasor@gmail.com

224-324-6365

www.lillianrosereasor.weebly.com



Cliff and Cathy Curry Carlson

Cliff Carlson, owner of *Irish American News*, and founder of *Food Industry News*, proposed to photographer Cathy Curry on a mountainside in Washington. They were married July 26, 2014 on the shore of Lake Michigan in Illinois Beach State Park.

Photos by Stacy McReynolds





The Celtic Knot, Celebrates 10 Years

Over a recent weekend, two wedding parties used Evanston's Celtic Knot Public House as one of the bases for their celebrations. Between dinners, receptions and tying the knot, it was back to 626 Church Street

great food, drink good drinks, listen to music- live, local and free, three times a week - an authentic Irish public house. The hard working staff, some there from the beginning, many for the best part of a decade,

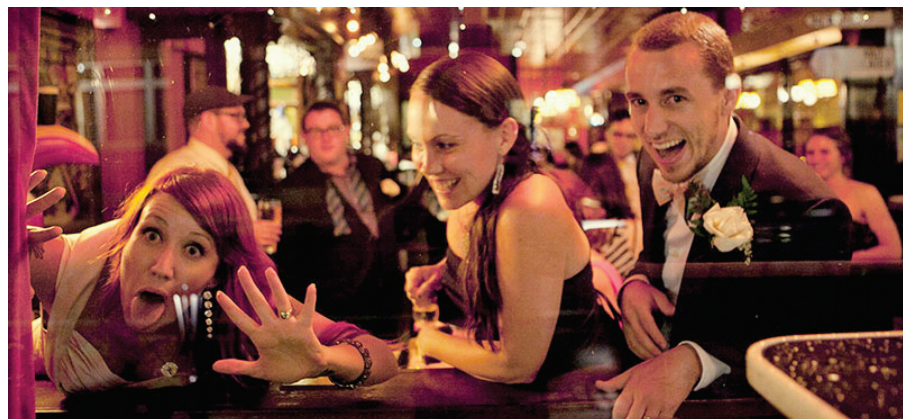


image taken from

<http://jeremylawsonphotography.com/blog.cfm?postID=895>

for food, drinks and hanging out. The reason was simple - fond memories, for both couples met in the friendly confines of the Evanston favorite, now on the cusp of celebrating 10 years in business.

It was a stand out weekend for Evanston-based owners Liz Bartlow Breslin and Patrick Breslin (who met while working in a restaurant in London), and the team that they work with, but just a couple of days of many great ones over a decade since the Celtic Knot first opened its somewhat famous revolving doors back on January 10, 2005.

The vision that they had 10 years ago is still going strong and getting stronger day by day.

This is where people meet, greet, connect, tell stories, eat

make sure The Knot is a truly comfortable venue for it's regulars - including many faculty, students and employees of nearby Northwestern University - and visitors to Evanston.

It's what Patrick, from County Down, Ireland, and Illinois native Liz talked about before those doors opened.

And back in the day they talked with, worked with and learnt from other people, not least Steve Prescott, the man behind a restaurant renaissance in Evanston beginning in the mid-eighties. Never mind the public honors - most recently named by Time Out among the top five bars and restaurants in Evanston - this place has a serious word of mouth reputation...
...for its warm, efficient and

knowledgeable people serving consistent and delicious food - just try the sausage roll for openers, then follow it with Fish and Chips, Shepherd's Pie or one of the weekly dinner specials created by long serving Head Chef Carlos Perez. Top it off with a dessert plate. It's an unpretentious food haven on the North Shore that also serves an informal Afternoon Tea a couple of times a week.

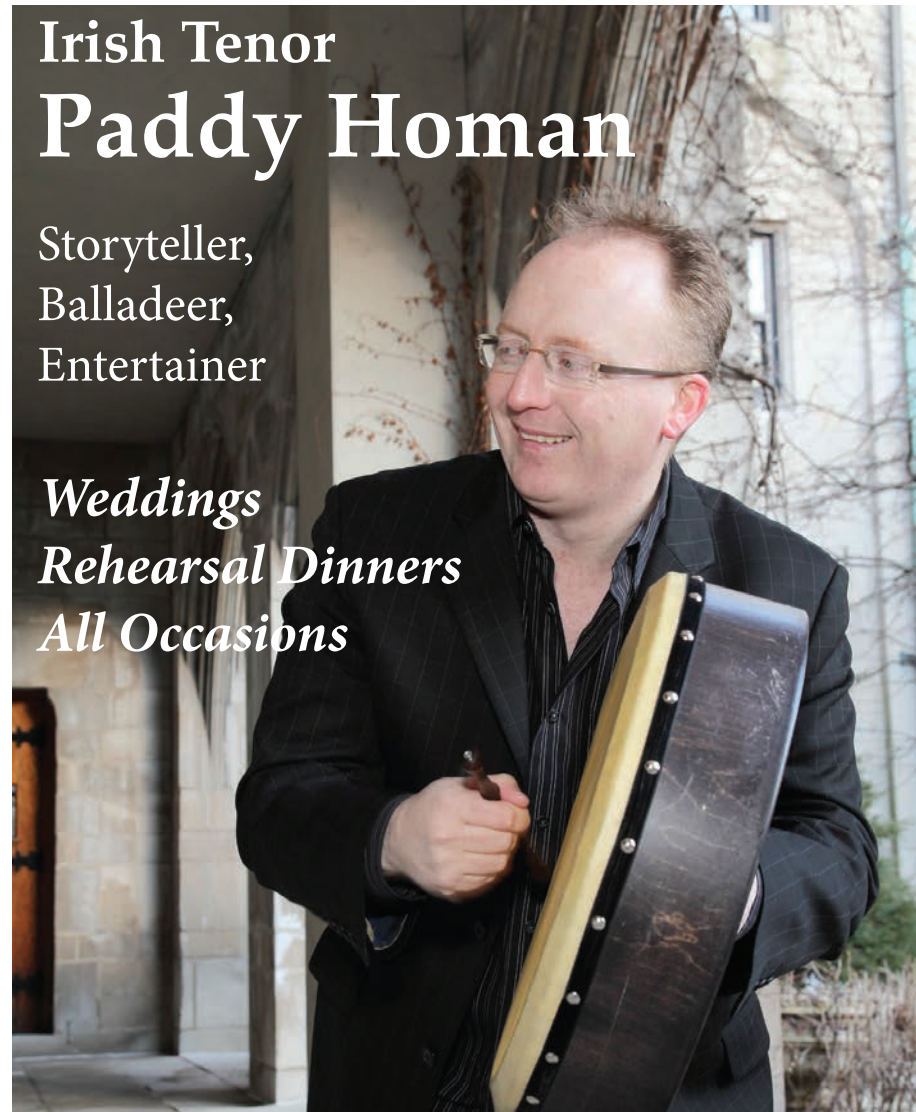
And to celebrate there will be a weekend of music and storytelling with Mad Bread (Newgrass) on Friday 9th, One of The Girls (Irish Folk) on Saturday 10th and Storyteller, Jim May on Sunday 11th. As always, never a cover. Here's to The Celtic Knot Public House, ten years and Happy Birthday.

For further information contact Liz or Patrick at 847-864-1679

Irish Tenor Paddy Homan

Storyteller,
Balladeer,
Entertainer

Weddings
Rehearsal Dinners
All Occasions



857-891-6333

www.paddyhoman.com



Jennifer Devlin, Founder of Celtic Complexion Organic Skincare

Only Skincare Products from Celtic Complexion Give You All These Advantages

As Seen In...



Formulated specifically for Celtic complexions.

Celtic skin types are people whose heritage is from England, Ireland, and Scotland. These people are often ruddy, fair, sensitive, and prone to rosacea, which causes redness in the skin. We have created blends that work with Celtic complexions to eliminate redness, dryness, and sensitivity.

No synthetic chemicals. Because 60% of what you put on your skin is absorbed, Celtic Complexion skin care products use only organic ingredients and are 100% synthetic chemical-free. Also gluten-free and cruelty-free.

No water. One of the dirty little secrets in the cosmetic industry is water. Most beauty products on the market are water - up to 80%. As a result of this dilution, you can go through a cream in about 6 weeks. In addition, tap water contains multiple toxins including pathogens, ammonia, chlorine, fluoride, pesticides, and heavy metals including lead and mercury, which is absorbed through your pores.

Artisan skin care products. Our skin care products are hand-blended, made with care, purpose, and integrity. We are a small business, not a big corporation whose main motivation is shareholder profits. The quality of our artisan serums and creams is much superior to skin care products manufactured using machines.

Purity. We keep our Celtic Complexion products pure. Every jar is made fresh-to-order, in small batches, using the purest ingredients we can buy.

Guarantee. If you are not 100% satisfied with any Celtic Complexion skin care product, just return the unused portion or even the empty bottle within 90 days for a full product refund. That way, you risk nothing.

In good company. Celtic Complexion has been seen in British Vogue magazine and Organic Spa magazine, Irish American News and is a sponsor of the Rose of Tralee Festival (American contestants) and is a supporter of the Celtic Radio Network.



www.CelticComplexion.com





Chicago Gaelic Park

Serving the social & cultural needs of the Irish community throughout Chicagoland



A Chairde:

Members of Gaelic Park will have an opportunity this month to cast their votes for ten positions on our Board of Directors. We have 30 Directors who each serve 3 year terms so in every calendar year ten Director positions come up for renewal. I am proud to be a Gaelic Park Director and to volunteer alongside a wonderful generation of Irish men and women, Irish Americans and many others. We are all rightly proud of Our Great Irish Center and the many great memories and experiences that we have and continue to share there. I wish every year for fresh and new people to renew and regenerate the spirit of all and it is fitting that every spring Gaelic Park is renewed with the enthusiasm and spirit that fresh new faces and refreshed older faces

bring. Democracy does come at a price, we need people to step up and invariably we cherish busy people in the belief that they are busy for a reason. We also need people to vote, all shareholders and current members can vote. I believe in democracy and in the collected will of the majority which is the foundation of this great country. Gaelic Park belongs to all of us and our Board reflects your choices so please participate in the upcoming election and exercise your right to choose.

December has been kind so far after a very cold November, but there is always a warm welcome waiting for you at Gaelic Park, I hope to see you and your friends sitting by the fire at the Carraig Pub in the coming months.

John Devitt, President



The County Connection Corner

Antrim Armagh Carlow Cavan Clare
Cork Derry Donegal Down Dublin

Fermanagh Galway Kerry Kildare Kilkenny Laois Leitrim
Limerick Longford Louth Mayo Meath Monaghan Offaly
Roscommon Sligo Tipperary Tyrone Waterford
Westmeath Wexford Wicklow

Share your County upcoming events with our readers.... call the Gaelic Park Office or email your news to dunmaynor12@yahoo.com.

2015 Event Calendar 2015

January

1/06 **Women's Little Christmas Night with Karaoke**
1/11 & 2/8 **Sunday Mass & Breakfast** 10am
1/31 **Merry Ploughboys** 7:30pm

February

2/1 **Big Game in the Carraig Pub**
2/4 **Musical Luncheon RR** NOON
2/7 **St. Jarlath's Dancing For Our Stars** 6:00pm
2/8 **Wolfstones** 7:00pm
2/11 **Ladies Auxiliary Meeting** 7:30pm
Welcoming New Members, join us for the first meeting of 2015!
2/15 **Bridal Boutique**

***(RR) = Reservations Required 708.687.9323**

Monthly Musical Luncheon Doors open at noon, hot lunch served at 1pm for just \$15 per person.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED (No January Luncheon)

Sunday Classic Carvery Full hot buffet dinner! Entertainment:
1/4 Ray Gavin, 1/11 Gerry Haughey, 1/18 Joe Cullen and
1/25 Kieran Byrne. RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Pub Irish Music Sessions Thursday Evenings at 7:30pm

Pub Trivia Tuesday Evenings at 7:30pm

Monday Evenings **Set Dancing** 7:30pm

Tuesday Evenings **Ceili Dancing Lessons 7pm/Ceili** 7:30pm

Sunday Evening **CGP Radio Live** WCEV 1450 AM 7-8pm



CGP Office 708.687.9323 www.chicagogaelicpark.org

VISIT THE CGP LIBRARY



Women's Little Christmas Tuesday January 6, 2015

Join us for a fun-filled night
of Song and Laughter!

Little Christmas is a "ladies night out",
rewarding women for their labors
during the holiday season.

Please RSVP to reserve your seating for
you and a friend. Phone 708-687-9323

Bring a donation of Canned Goods for "Together We Cope" and receive
a complimentary gift certificate for The Carraig Irish Pub

Drink Specials
Munchies
And Karaoke!

Membership

NEW RENEWAL Family \$50 Individual \$30

Name _____ last first initial

Spouse (if joining) _____ last first initial

Address _____ street apt/unit #

_____ city state zip

Donation enclosed \$ _____ (Checks payable to Chicago Gaelic Park)

Mail to: Chicago Gaelic Park Membership, 6119 W. 147th St, Oak Forest IL 60452

phone: 708.687.9323

fax: 708.687.0120

www.chicagogaelicpark.org

www.facebook.com/ChicagoGaelicPark



Gaelic Park can be found on
FACEBOOK AND TWITTER!
TAKE A MOMENT AND "LIKE" US!





Chicago Gaelic Park

Serving the social & cultural needs of the Irish community throughout Chicagoland



John Griffin and Cliff Carlson off to a winning start!



A table of winners

The Place To Be is the Carrraig Pub at CGP

The place to have your "perfect" party! The Carrraig Pub is now offering a catered affair for small group parties in the Pub! We have a variety of food and drink options available. Give Pub Manager, Teresa, a call today, and she will be happy to help you with all the details!

708.687.9323

The perfect food.
The perfect pint.
All at the perfect pub.

Open to the Public
7 nights a week

Monthly food & drink specials!
Weekend entertainment
with no cover charge!

Enjoy the Music & Spirit of the Irish in our Authentic Pub Imported Directly From Ireland.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC 7 DAYS • LIVE ENTERTAINMENT EVERY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT

- Daily Drink and Food Specials
- Expanded Pub Food and Appetizer Menu - Available Daily
- Pub Trivia every Tuesday, October-May starting at 7:30pm
- Traditional Irish Music Session Hosted by Members of The Irish Musicians of Chicago and their Students every Thursday at 7:30pm

the CARRAIG IRISH PUB

Live Music in the Pub

Fri	Jan 2	Richie Z	8:00pm
Sat	Jan 3	DJ Bernie	8:30pm
Fri	Jan 9	Gerry Haughey	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 10	Billy O'Donoghue & Larry Nugent	9:00pm
Fri	Jan 16	Joe Cullen	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 17	Bernie Glim & Country Roads	8:00pm
Fri	Jan 23	Joe McShane	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 24	Nicky G & Sandy Lee	8:00pm
Fri	Jan 30	Gerry & Kara Eadie	7:30pm
Sat	Jan 31	The Ploughboys	???

Chicago Gaelic Park
6119 W. 147th Street • Oak Forest, IL
708.687.9323
www.chicagogaelpark.org



Thursdays Irish Musicians Traditional Sessions

Join us for

"THE BIG GAME"

Sunday February 1, 2015

at

the CARRAIG
IRISH PUB



Open Bar, Snacks,

Half Time Hot Food Buffet,

and Raffle Prizes



\$35 Per Person

Open Bar from Kickoff
to Final Whistle

The Carrraig Irish Pub - Located at Chicago Gaelic Park
6119 W. 147th Street - Oak Forest, Illinois 60452
708-687-9323 www.chicagogaelpark.org



Chicago Gaelic Park

Serving the social & cultural needs of the Irish community throughout Chicagoland



ST. JARLATH'S DANCING FOR OUR STARS

Get your advanced tickets now!

Saturday, February 7

Gaelic Park

Doors Open at 6:00

A total of eight couples will dance their hearts out to earn judges scores and audience votes! Only one couple will win the coveted mirror ball trophy! Tickets are \$15 per person online or \$20 at the door, and may be purchased at www.chicagostjarlaths.com A limited amount of tickets will be sold. Can't make it to the big show? Support your favorite dancers (and the St. Jarlath's) by voting on-line! Remember every dollar donated equals one vote for your favorite dancer-- \$1=1 vote, \$20 =20 votes! Questions can be emailed to dancing4ourstars@gmail.com.

Please remember

THIS IS AN ADULTS ONLY EVENT!

St. Jarlath's Youth GAA

Tickets on Sale Now to our 2nd Annual

Dancing for our Stars

February 7, 2015 at Gaelic Park



This is Chicago, so we encourage our supporters to vote early and often! Visit our website to learn more.

www.chicagostjarlaths.com



Chicago Gaelic Park

The Premiere Wedding Venue
of the South Suburbs

Presents

"The Bridal Boutique"

Join Us On

Sunday February 15, 2015
For a day of shopping at our

"Bridal Boutique"

Featuring 50 of our
Top-Rated Vendors

Complimentary Hors d'oeuvres
And 45 Great Giveaways!

12:00-3:00pm

Admission \$5.00 at the door

With a Fashion Show Featuring

"David's Bridal"

Chicago Gaelic Park is located at
6119 W. 147th Street - Oak Forest, IL 60452
(708) 687-9323 / www.chicagogaelpark.org



Gaelic Park's 2015 Student Cultural Essay Contest

The topic this year will be:

"What would you do if you won the lottery?"

Please see our web site for complete guidelines or pick up this information at the Gaelic Park front office. This contest is open to all students in good standing in grades 6 thru 12. Cash prizes will be awarded to the winning entries.



Chicago Gaelic Park

6119 W. 147th Street - Oak Forest, IL 60452 - 708-687-9323
Check out the website - ChicagoGaelicPark.org



It's Concert Season at Gaelic Park!

THE MERRY
PLOUGHBOYS

Saturday

January 31, 2015

\$20.00

Doors open 7:30pm

Show at 8:30pm



wolfe tones

in concert

saturday

January 24

Tribute To

PHIL DURKIN

Sunday, January 25th

2:00 p.m.

at

Chicago Gaelic Park
6119 W. 147th Street
Oak Forest IL 60452

Music by Irish Musicians

Food - Cash Bar

\$20.00 Donation

CGP 2015 Festival Queen Could Be YOU... check our website for updates and more details!



Boyle the Kettle

We'll Have A Sup Of Tea
Tom Boyle



Stable Fire

On November 23, 2014 32 horses died in a stable fire in Woodstock, Illinois. As soon as that story hit the news, I immediately recalled the news of June 10, 1950. My mother's brother, Jack Cooney, (pictured) from Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Ireland, came here to work for Emil Denmark, the Cadillac dealer on Chicago's Southside who owned a string of 22 racehorses. Jack, like the rest of the Cooney's were horse trainers. In Ireland he trained horses for the fox hunt - hunters and show jumpers.

The Denemarks had 22 horses, all thoroughbreds for racing.

During a severe electrical storm the stable caught fire. There was 200 tons of hay stored in the loft over the barn. Jack and the other trainer, whose living quarters were attached to the barn, tried to get the horses out. Overcome by smoke, Jack was feeling his way along the wall trying to get out of the barn. By chance he found a glass door-knob, the only one in the barn and made it out. When the fire was over they found the other trainer still holding a horses halter in his hand. Both he and the horse lie dead in the ashes. He had blindfolded the horse in his attempt to get out. We were there the next day and the carcasses of the horses were still in the ashes, some were split open by the intense heat of the fire.

Everybody was stunned.

Uncle Jack soon went to work training horses for a family by the name of Healy in Hinsdale, but after six months in this country he decided to go back to Ireland. We celebrated a birthday together on Sept 10th of that year. Jack was born on the 10th and I was born on the 12th of September.

No Justice No Peace

What's driving all of the demonstrations that were triggered by the shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri? The Black community feels victimized! The

perception or the reality of that depends on how you see it, is that unarmed Black men are often killed in confrontations with the police. We are in the midst of the perfect storm, with a wave of demonstrations across the country. Most of these demonstrations are not spontaneous but premeditated. Like Occupy Chicago's Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, "No Justice No Peace," is there battle cry. They are demanding community control of the Chicago police.

Splice this into the class warfare plank the Democrats built into their campaign platform. The minimum wage crusade was also part of that platform. There was a minimum wage referendum on the ballot in the last election. Many voted to increase the minimum wage including myself, but not in quantum leaps. Nobody looked at the whole package and the increased Social Security payments both recipients and employers have to pay.

We now have a, "new tyranny" of unfettered Capitalism, that's a Marxist demonization of wealth. For the record Pope Francis said, "Marxism doesn't work."

When a "community organizer" showed up in New York from Ferguson, Missouri he said, "I flew out to see what was going on over the death of Eric Garner." So I began to wonder what exactly is a community organizer?

"Perhaps the simplest way to describe community organizing is to say it is the practice of identifying a specific aggrieved population, say unemployed steelworkers, or

itinerant fruit-pickers, or residents of a particularly bad neighborhood, and agitating them until they become so upset about their condition that they take collective action to put pressure on local, state, or federal officials to fix the problem, often by giving the affected group money. Organizers like to call that direct action."

Was it a community organizer who gave birth to Governor Quinn's Neighborhood Recovery Initiative, a 52 million dollar overt attempt to woo the Black vote? I wonder who arranged that?



One can readily see the opportunities for misappropriated funds, and as of now there has been no accountability for the distribution of the funds.

Reverend Congressman, Al Sharpton, would indite the prosecutor and the media in the case of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. He is proclaiming the grand jury system is broken. While only 14 of 160,000 grand juries did not indite, it is hard to believe the system is broken.

Chris Rock, said "if he could do an interview for CBS 60 Minutes he would go to Ferguson, Missouri and interview White cops and ask them why they never shoot White

kids."

A Ferguson, Missouri placard read: "Down with Capitalist Police Terrorism." How do you measure that against, civil disorder, looting, riots, and arson?

Professional sports teams even got in the act. Five professional football players with the St. Louis Rams entered the stadium with their hands up in solidarity with the "Hands Up, Don't Shoot" demonstration. That action only exacerbated the situation. The same holds true for the professional basketball players, including Derrick Rose,

who wore the "I Can't Breathe" T-shirts during warmup. Then we have the Congressional Black Caucus rising to speak with their hands up in the House chamber.

This all boils down to the animosity between the police and the Black community where high crime rates exist. Former New York City Mayor, Rudy Guilliani said, "You wouldn't have a high police presence in your neighborhoods if you would stop killing each other." NYPD Commissioner, Bratton, sent NYPD intelligence officers to Ferguson, Missouri to find out who the agitators were, and if they would also show up in New York.

How do we resolve his dilemma? Do we only have Black police officers in Black neighborhoods, Latino police officers in Mexican neighborhoods? Elgin, Illinois has already established an academy for Latino police officers. They were even recruiting police officers in Puerto Rico. How about Chinatown? Only Chinese police officers? There are a great many Irish-American police officers so we are covered.

The moral of the story is don't get confrontational or wise off if you get stopped by a police officer. Yes sir or yes ma'am, or better yet, yes officer will surely pay

dividends."

Queen Contest

The Sheila Tully Dancers happened to be at the WPNA radio station in Oak Park, IL where I was meeting Lauren Cantinella, the reigning St. Patrick's Day Parade Queen, to promote the queen contest for 2015. The Hagerty Family Irish Hour was on the air, and the jocular Jack Hagerty was our host. Seven young dancers are headed for the world championships in Montreal, Canada and one of the girls took first place in the preliminary competition. Each one of them had their picture taken with Queen Lauren, and each girl got to wear her crown. It was one of the best experiences that I have had in the Irish community.

Lost Relatives Found

Many years ago I was given a picture of my grandfather's brother, William Boyle and his family. There were over 20 people in the picture all numbered and named on the back. The picture was taken in San Francisco. I have tried to make contact with those people for many years.

William Boyle, my grandfather's brother, immigrated to San Francisco in 1888. He was a section boss on the Southern Pacific Railroad, and owned a small hotel and bar. I have followed the family on Ancestry.com, and the U.S. Census from 1900 to 1940. Thanks to my friends, Kent Covey and Maureen Kennedy at the Greater Cincinnati Irish Center who sent me a page from the San Francisco phone book, I was able to contact two distant cousins, William Boyle's grandsons, Richard, and Scotty Boyle. Sometime early next year I will go to San Francisco to meet the family.

Margaret O'Ryan Lombardo

Congratulations to native Chicagoan, "Peggy" as she is known, who was named the new President of the Irish Fellowship Club in Chicago at the Annual Christmas Luncheon, December 5, 2014 at the Chicago Hilton and Towers. Peggy and her husband, Steve, own the popular Gibson's restaurants.



Daly Investor

By John P. Daly



Income Stream

Couples will often neglect planning for their Social Security income benefit in the context of the survivor benefit. Women typically outlive their spouse by 3 to 4 years. And, they often face longer periods of disability than men during the latter years of their lives. These prolonged periods of disability (e.g. expensive, chronic 6 Ways to get more Social Security Income.

Electing your Social Security income benefit may be the most important financial decision you make in your lifetime. Singles, and especially couples, can miss opportunities to collect hundreds of thousands of dollars of additional income over their lifetimes by making poor Social Security income election decisions. By applying little-known, yet creative claiming strategies, you may be rewarded with significant additional retirement income over your lifetime.

Get It Right The First Time

Because of a recent law change you now have only 12 months from the date you file your claim to choose a more favorable election method. You should now be more diligent than ever when choosing how and when to take your Social Security income. If you have made your income election within the past 12 months, you should consider reviewing it closely with a qualified Financial Advisor. You may still have time to re-file if another strategy is a smarter choice. If you are about to file a claim, be sure to evaluate your benefit election options thoroughly.

Don't Claim Too Early

Research studies indicate about half of all Americans file during their first year of eligibility—typically age 62. Unfortunately, for a good portion of these folks, this could be a costly mistake. Fil-

ing early could mean forgoing thousands of dollars, and in some instances (especially with couples), over a hundred thousand dollars of their total lifetime income stream. Although you certainly can file at 62 for benefits, most Americans will obtain greater lifetime income amounts by waiting until they reach age 66 or even 70. While this can, in certain cases, be a gamble, it is usually the most prudent choice to make. If you decide to claim your benefit early at age 62, you will receive a smaller check for a longer period of time. If, however, you claim later at 66 or 70, you will receive a larger check for a shorter time period. Ages 78 to 80 are often called the break-even age.

Spousal Income Benefit

Married couples, in particular, can employ creative strategies to maximize their lifetime Social Security income. To do this, you must pay close attention and learn the rules. For example, you should consider the often overlooked, yet powerful benefit, called the "spousal income benefit." Understanding how this benefit works and correctly applying it in Social

Security income planning can be a significant generator of additional income for a couple. For example, a spouse with a low earnings history, or a spouse who never worked, can collect up to one-half of the primary earner's (i.e. spouse with the highest benefit) Social Security income. Had this lower-earning spouse filed on his/her own record, he/she might receive very little, and in some cases, no Social Security income. Please note that there are some rules, caveats, and exceptions that apply to the spousal benefit.

Survivor Benefit nursing care) can result in significant financial duress to the surviving spouse.

Following the death of a spouse, the survivor receives one Social Security income check instead of two. And, in some instances, the survivor's employment pension income might be reduced or altogether eliminated. Therefore, it is critical for the surviving spouse to maximize his or her Social Security survivor benefit to make up for these potential income reductions.

Do The Math

Social Security administration

personnel are typically involved with helping the public with information requests, case management, and routine claiming requests. The local Social Security staff is typically not allowed to provide customized financial advice or to suggest case-by-case Social Security optimization financial planning recommendations for singles or married couples.

It is essential that you make the effort to locate an advisor who specializes in Social Security income planning. He or she will help you understand the concepts and tools put forth in this report. An advisor specializing in Social Security planning will have dedicated software to help you evaluate the hundreds of Social Security income claiming possibilities to help you get more income. A significant portion of pre-retirees and early retirees do not "do the math" to make the optimal Social Security income decision for their unique situation.

Plan

Some Social Security claimants think their Social Security income is, or will be, tax-free. For many,

Continued to next page



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on design*

Are you looking for that perfect piece or inspiration for a great looking room?

Stop in and experience a refreshing array of products and bright ideas for your home.



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Careers

By James F. Fitzgerald, CPA



Will You Be Responsible In 2015?

It seems to me that our society is consumed with the concept of responsibility. Who is responsible for the dismal performance of the Chicago Bears, the White Sox, or the Cubs? We the public want to know; we demand to know who's responsible. And of course, we want to determine who's responsible for global warming, the economy, blah, blah, blah. Somehow we want to assign responsibility for everything in our world.

At some level, I can understand the passion to establish responsibility for happenings in the world. I expect people to act responsibly. Certainly, at least I expect adults to conduct themselves responsibly. I received a delightful note recently from a dear friend who was a college classmate. To paraphrase her comments, she said "I see where you are still trying to persuade people to conduct themselves the way you think they should." My

initial reaction to her comment was bemusement. She always had a way of saying things that could easily be confusing; did she mean this or that? But upon some reflection I do believe she hit the nail on the head. I have strong opinions on many things and normally don't hesitate to state them. All this led me to deciding on RESPONSIBILITY as the subject of this article.

I am convinced that many of us let "the world" control our lives. We do what others expect us to do regardless if we agree with the handling of any matter. How different our world might be if more people acted responsibly! What if we all accepted the laws and the customs of our society! We need to accept the reality that we cannot change everybody's sense of responsibility, but we can enhance the level of responsibility of those around us.

We seem to have become a so-

ciety where our first reaction to a criticism or complaint is to point our finger at someone else; it's their fault, not mine. We see this conduct on a daily basis, whether you consider business people, academicians, politicians or religious leaders, they all acquiesce. Our primary focus seems to be shifting the responsibility or blame onto someone else. Do whatever it takes to shift the focus or (nowadays) the narrative away from ourselves.

How do you learn responsible behavior? Many of us learned it from our parents, our siblings, our pals, or our teachers and coaches. Do you recall your parents overtly teaching you or modeling for you the need for responsibility? Did you feel that your parents helped you to acquire a sense of "right"? Does our society need a macro change in the concept of responsibility? Perhaps our society should withdraw some of the liberties that we have granted to our children. It seems to me that there are a lot of parents who want to be a pal not a parent to their children.

Not to sound like talk radio, but a lot of us could use a parenting course regardless of the age of our children. Do you know many parents who actually discussed

the financial consequences of their youngsters' college choice? How many parents expect that the student will contribute to the high college costs? Is it responsible for a parent to allow Junior to go to a high priced college and load himself down with crushing college debt? Particularly when Junior has his goal set for a modest paying job like teaching.

I was stunned recently when a client told me that he decided to join the Navy for four years so he could get the GI Bill which would avoid eating away at his father's financial nest egg. Set aside a hitch in the military, what about going to a local community college for the first two years? When I spoke to a friend of mine, he told me about his son taking an English 101 course, which cost several thousand dollars and other similarly basic courses in the same price range. Does the parent insist that Junior participate in the cost minimization program by striving to obtain scholarships? Has Junior located an on campus job that would mitigate the overall cost? If Junior has some "skin" in the game, s/he is more likely to be reasonably interested in their academic performance.

If a parent embraces the notion of totally paying for Junior's college costs, has he taught the student anything about responsibility? This article is NOT intended to blame our parents for our mistakes. No, rather I would hope it would help us to decide that we need to be RESPONSIBLE private citizens; we need to face up to our mistakes, admit them and find ways to minimize their occurrence in the future.

We need to come to the realization that our actions have consequences. Oh, yes, many of us may have dodged the "bullet" in the past, but is this the best way to handle a situation? Did we choose to NOT tell one of our fellow employees that s/he needed to change their behavior or they were going to be fired? Instead did we choose to lament the "insensitive" management of our company when our colleague is fired?

I have been in the outplacement business for a lot of years. Richard Nelson Bolles' iconic book "What's Color Is Your Parachute?" is still the "Bible" on the career transition process. It says that the typical job seeker spends about five hours a week (or less) looking for a job. Searching for a job on such a limited basis sure doesn't seem to be very RESPONSIBLE to me.

For that matter, we are continuously reading about the high percentage of people who "hate" their jobs. Do you really think that someone who hates their job does the job anywhere near their potential? I doubt it. So let me suggest that in 2015 you model and discuss responsible behavior with your loved ones and others around you. Make it your business to find teachable moments. Carpe Diem.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION: Hold yourself responsible for a higher standard than anybody else expects of you. Never excuse yourself. Henry Ward Beecher, Congregationalist clergyman & social activist.

James F. Fitzgerald is the president of James F. Fitzgerald & Associates, Inc., an Oak Brook, IL-based senior executive coaching and outplacement firm. Web: Jamesfitzgerald.com Jamesfitz37@hotmail.com #630-684-2204.

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Continued from last page

this may not be the case. Up to 85% of your Social Security income may be taxable due to what is called provisional income. Several sources of income can contribute toward triggering the provisional income taxation thresholds for you. These income sources may impact the taxation of your Social Security income benefit. These income sources include, but are not limited to: Distributions from your 401k or IRA account(s), Wages, pension income, CD, money market, savings interest and Dividends from stocks, bonds, mutual funds

You will want to be mindful and minimize the taxation of your Social Security benefit if possible. Therefore, it is important to investigate and determine in which sequence you might draw upon your retirement income stream and/or retirement asset buckets.

In summary, the Social Security

income election decision should not be made in a vacuum. You should strongly consider working closely with a financial professional who has the experience and tools to guide you through the Social Security income election maze. He or she should also be able to help you synchronize your Social Security income election with your bigger picture retirement income plan. Your Social Security income election is one of the most important money decisions you may make in your lifetime, so you will want to do everything possible to get it right.

John P. Daly is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and President of Daly Investment Management, LLC a fee only Registered Investment Advisor specializing in financial planning and wealth management. 312-239-1317 john@dalyinvestment.com Contact John with questions about Investments or Financial Planning.

An Immigrant's Musings

Michael Leonard



A New Year - New Hope

One of the joys of each New Year is the fact that it offers us a new hope. When I was growing up in Ireland no matter how hard times seemed to be the old neighbors would always say, "where there's life, there's hope." Without hope we would surely be a very pessimistic people. Hope is the virtue that keeps people going through difficult times.

I have often remarked, that our undocumented brothers and sisters are above all a people who live with hope. The executive action on immigration issued by President Obama in November, brought a ray of hope into many homes this past Christmas.

As I go to press, the details of how the President's action will be applied are sketchy at best. One thing is clear; in order to qualify an individual will need to have been continuously present in the country for a period of five years. The action will apply almost all undocumented parents of US Citizens and green card holders. In order to benefit, individuals will need to be able to show proof of residency for the past five years. They will also be required to pay a fee, (actual amount to be decided) back pay any taxes that are owed and crucially each applicant will need to pass a background security check.

It is important to remember that while the President's action is to be lauded, it is in essence only a temporary fix. The sad part is there remain approx. seven million people who do not qualify for any relief at this time.

Also, I've been asked, could the next President reverse Obama's order? The simple answer is yes, however most informed commentators are of the opinion that it is very unlikely that the next President would take such

a backward step.

The most hopeful solution to the ongoing difficulties with our immigration system is to have Congress do its job and enact a comprehensive solution. The new Republican controlled congress has a golden opportunity to work with President Obama in his final two years to make this happen. The difficult question remains, will the GOP rise to the task or will they continue to alienate a significant part of the population, only time will tell.

Temper Control

Once upon a time there was a little boy who was talented, creative, handsome, and extremely bright. A natural leader. The kind of person everyone would normally have wanted on their team or project. But he was also self-centered and had a very bad temper. When he got angry, he usually said, and often did, some very hurtful things. In fact, he seemed to have little regard for those around him. Even friends. So, naturally, he had few. "But," he told himself, "that just shows how stupid most people are!"

As he grew, his parents became concerned about this personality flaw, and pondered long and hard about what they should do. Finally, the father had an idea. And he struck a bargain with his son. He gave him a bag of nails, and a BIG hammer. "Whenever you lose your temper," he told the boy, "I want you to really let it out. Just take a nail and drive it into the oak boards of that old fence out back. Hit that nail as hard as you can!"

Of course, those weathered oak boards in that old fence were almost as tough as iron, and the hammer was mighty heavy, so it wasn't nearly as easy as it first sounded. Nevertheless, by the end of the first day, the boy had driven 37 nails into

the fence (That was one angry young man!). Gradually, over a period of weeks, the number dwindled down. Holding his temper proved to be easier than driving nails into the fence! Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He felt mighty proud as he told his parents about that accomplishment.

"As a sign of your success," his father responded, "you get to PULL OUT one nail. In fact, you can do that each day that you don't lose your temper even once."

Well, many weeks passed. Finally one day the young boy was able to report proudly that all the nails were gone.

At that point, the father asked his son to walk out back with him and take one more good look at the fence. "You have done well, my son," he said. "But I want you to notice the holes that are left. No matter what happens from now on, this fence will never be the same. Saying or doing hurtful things in anger produces the same kind of result. There will always be a scar. It won't matter how many times you say you're sorry, or how many years pass, the scar will still be there. And a verbal wound is as bad as a physical one. People are much more valuable than an old fence. They make us smile. They help us succeed. Some will even become friends who share our joys, and support us through bad times. And, if they trust us, they will also open their hearts to us. That means we need to treat everyone with love and respect. We need to prevent as many of those scars as we can."

A most valuable lesson, don't you think? And a reminder most of us need from time to time. Everyone gets angry occasionally. The real test is what we DO with it.

If we are wise, we will spend our time building bridges rather than barriers in our relationships.

Author Unknown

Should you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at: sliabhanoir@yahoo.com

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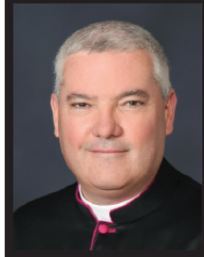
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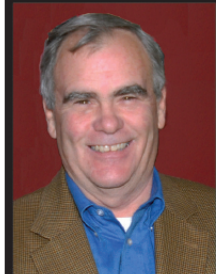
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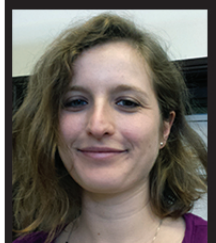
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With each New Year we are offered a fresh plate upon which to place the things that will nourish

us. Ideally, they will not consist strictly of things that sustain us physically, but enrich us emotionally, mentally and soulfully. For me, that has always presented itself in the form of travel, more specifically, traveling back to Ireland. Some would argue that returning to a destination multiple times would dilute the sensations you felt originally. I wholeheartedly disagree, because Ireland is multi-faceted and ever-changing in the midst of its continuity. This year will be no exception for the destination voted #5, by Lonely Planet, as a "must visit" in 2015.

What's on tap for 2015 in Ireland? Here's a brief overview of some of the upcoming festivals and new attractions for the visitor:

The Gobbins, Larne, Co. Antrim – Originally constructed in 1902, The Gobbins is a dramatic coastal walk set to reopen in late March 2015. A series of staircases, tubular and suspension bridges, caves and tunnels affords the visitor unparalleled views. At one time, The Gobbins was a more popular attraction than the Giant's Causeway. For more information visit: <http://thegobbinscliffpath.com/>

Wicklow Garden Festival – Various venues throughout Co. Wicklow – April thru September - Due to its temperate climate making it easy to grow a variety of unique flowers and plants, Co. Wicklow is known as the



"Garden County". The festival offers a great opportunity to visit some of Ireland's finest Historic Houses and Gardens, including Killruddery House and Gardens, Powerscourt House and Gardens, Russborough House, Mount Usher Gardens, Avondale House and Forest Park. Private gardens open at different times during the Festival. For more information visit: www.wicklowgardens.com

Kilkenny Arts Festival – August 7 – 16 – Recognized as the heritage capital of Ireland, this medieval city offers much to the visitor and especially during this 42 year old festival, which draws upon Irish and International talent alike, celebrating theatre, dance, music, literature, visual art and crafts. For more information visit: <http://www.kilkennyarts.ie/>

Puck Fair, Killorglin, Co. Kerry – August 10, 11, 12 - Puck Fair is one of Ireland's oldest festivals, celebrating almost 400 years of documented evidence. Where else but in Ireland would a wild mountain goat be crowned King and reign over a town for three days? Killorglin – where a goat is King and people act the goat! The first day of Puck Fair is called The Gathering Day which makes Puck Fair the original and oldest Gathering Festival in Ireland. You can experience the unique coronation ceremony & parade, enjoy free day & night concerts, storytelling, traditional music

sessions & dancers, music & dance workshops, midnight madness fireworks & the horse fair, as part

of the 36 hours of free family entertainment. For more details: <http://puckfair.ie>

Matchmaking Festival, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare – August 28 through October 4 – Now over 150 years old, this is Europe's largest "singles" event. People from around the world, regardless of age, come looking for love, and if not love...the craic. For more information: <http://matchmakerireland.com/>

For those planning a holiday in Ireland for 2015, a useful website to aid in planning your trip and purchasing tickets to attractions is <https://www.topattractionsireland.com/> You can instantly buy tickets and tickets are valid for 365 days in most cases.

This is just a sample of the big year that lies ahead in Ireland. There are a multitude of festivals, events and attractions offering the visitor a unique perspective into Irish culture and history. Ireland caters to a number of enthusiasts, from sports to history buffs to culinary arts and more. Wouldn't it be refreshing to boost your interest in a particular hobby, by experiencing it the Irish way?

Wishing you the very best of the New Year and hoping that you'll find the time to do the things you've always wanted to do...including that long dreamt of holiday to Ireland.

Until next time,
Go dté tú slán - "May you go safely",
Mary Ann

I invite all suggestions, comments, and of course questions.

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Getting to Know the Irish

By Tina Butler



Who were the English and why did they come to Ireland? (Land??) Well that's a bit of a joke since the last two articles I wrote were asking where the different groups of people came from. I think we all know who the English are and that England is a country in Europe, which still has a Monarch/Royals, as do 25 other countries.

Where does one start about such a controversial and emotional topic and for many of you readers it is personal since it's a current situation, in that England still rules

the Six Counties of the North of Ireland. I don't hold a degree in history but I will do my best to give a glimpse into this part of our story. This will be one part of an article that I will continue for a few contributions.

The reign of Henry VIII is a point of history that stands out for me because it was marked by a crown control policy of plantation, involving the arrival of thousands of English Protestant settlers and the consequent displacement of Irish Catholic landholders. As the

military and political defeat of Ireland became more pronounced in the early 17th century sectarian conflict became a recurrent theme in Irish history. The percentage of land owned by Irish Catholics in 1601 was 95% but by 1776 it was only 5%. The invasion of English soldiers was so extensive that the English parliament passed Statutes in 1366 that forbade English men from speaking Irish or adopting any Irish ways such as sport, marrying Irish women etc. England's

concerns about the possibility of Spain establishing itself in Ireland as a base to launch attacks against England resulted in what later became known as the "Plantation system" (something resembling ethnic cleansing??) The plan was to occupy Ireland with sufficient numbers of English Protestants who were meant to drive Irish Catholic peasants off their own valuable land into the bog or convert them into people who would obey the Crown.

The 17th and 18th centuries were periods when England firmly established itself in Ireland. Following the battle of Kinsale 1601, England moved deliberately in a series of steps to establish its control over all of Ireland via colonization/plantation. At the beginning most of the land was owned by Irish Catholics by the end of this period it was nearly all owned by Protestants. Irish nobleman who had rebelled against England escaped and went into exile in Europe, this historical event was called The Flight of the Earls.

England divided the land into lots of 1,000 acres, 2,000 acres, 3,000 acres it would be granted without charge to settlers but there were some requirements, no Irish person was allowed on the land. Also, the settlers had to be English and protestant loyal to the crown and who would be prepared to bear arms and fight for England. However, the size of the plantations made them unmanageable and thus made it necessary for native Irish to be kept on the land to "Work the land" and so they were required to pay rent and were also taxed. (The poor peasants who were initially robbed of their own land now were back on their land paying rent and taxes to English Landlords)

In 1649 a man infamous to all nationalists, named Oliver Cromwell (military/political leader) landed in Ireland and any land that had been owned by Irish people was confiscated and given to the English or the property on it was burned to the ground. Cromwell laid siege to Drogheda upon prevailing he had the entire town slaughtered. Next he went to Wexford and the town refused to bow to him and 3,000 were slaughtered. In 1652 the Act of Settlement was passed it was to give English soldiers Irish land instead of paying them I suppose the king ran out of money?

To be continued....

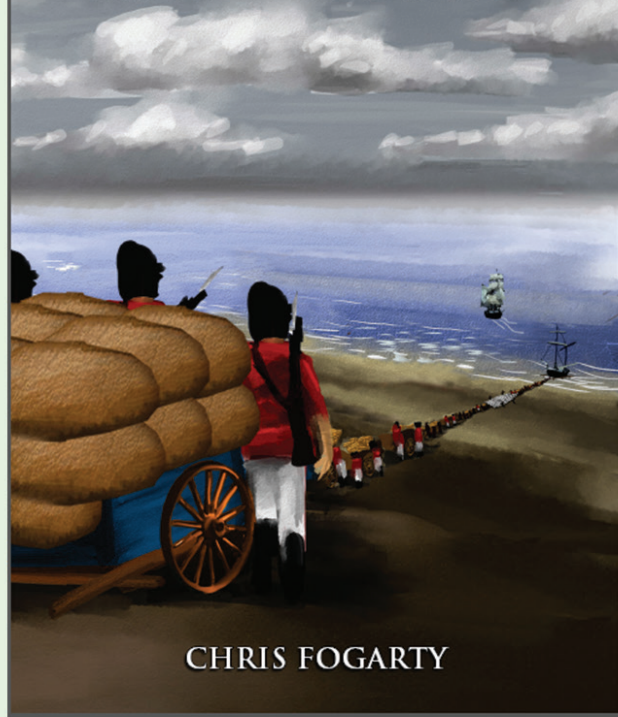
Gaelic words for the month:

Saoirse (searsha) Freedom
Coimhthioch (qivteak) Stranger
Goid (gwid) To steal

If you have any questions or comments please Email me at Molanive@yao.com

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Art Hammus, (r) President of the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation recently presented Edward F. McElroy with the Illinois State Crime Commission Life Time Achievement Award.

Ed has been active in the field of news and sports on WJOB, WIND and WJJD radio for over 65 years and currently hosts two TV shows. The Ed McElroy Show is taped at Comcast Channel 19 in the south suburbs and his Community In Focus Show tapes at Chicago Comcast Access TV, Channel 19 in Chicago.

McElroy is Past National Commander and Past State Commander of the Catholic War Veterans of the United States of America.

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irish-american.org

St. Patrick's Day Parade Corned Beef & Cabbage Dinner, Thurs, Jan. 29th

Plumber's Hall, Chicago
chicagostpatsparade.com

Bridal Boutique

Gaelic Park Feb 15th
chicagogaelpark.org

Ireland Network Ball

Feb. 21, The Drake,
140 E. Walton Place,
Chicago, 6:30pm
theirelandnetwork.com

Women of Concern Awards Luncheon

Friday, February 27,
Hyatt Regency Chicago
11:00 a.m. - Reception
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chicagoroseoftralee.com

**Irish American Hall of
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iahof.org

Gaelic Park
Irish Fest, May 22-25
chicagogaelpark.org

**Irish American Heritage
Center Fest, July 10-12**
irish-american.org

Milwaukee Irish Fest
Aug 13-16 irishfest.com

iBAMChicago2015
Gala Awards Dinner
October 9

Program Oct 10-11
Sharon Shannon
Concert October 10
High Kings Concert
October 11
ibamchicago.com

Our Take on Social Services

By Paul Dowling



Senior groups take place at IAHC and Gaelic Park. See below for specific details of senior group meetings this month. All senior group meetings begin at 10am. There is no cost and refreshments will be served. All are very welcome. If you need further information, please call our office on 773-282-8445.

Gaelic Park - Emerald Club
Wednesday, 14th January 2015
- Ireland on the Silver Screen

We start the New Year off with adventure and fine cinematic story telling as we watch a classic Irish tale from the 1990's. Into the West is the heart-warming story of two inner-city Dublin kids who take off across the country with their horse to become the greatest cowboys to ever live! The movie runs a little longer than our regular meeting so plan accordingly!

Wednesday, 28th January 2015
- Annual Fraud Update

It's time for our annual fraud update. Every day, scammers are coming up with new ways to try to trick people out of their hard earned money. If we are to avoid becoming the victims of their scams, we must stay well informed. To give us all the updates, we welcome a representative from the State's Attorney's Office to teach us about the new tricks being used by con artists and how we can better protect ourselves from fraud.

IAHC - Tara Club
Wednesday, 21st January 2015
- Ageless Grace Joint

Meeting with Tír na nÓg

Ageless Grace is a cutting-edge brain fitness program based on neuroplasticity that activates all 5 functions of the brain - analytical, strategic, kinesthetic learning, memory/recall, creativity and imagination - and simultaneously addresses all 21 physical skills needed for lifelong optimal function. This session will include some gentle movement designed for all ages and abilities. These exercises, based on everyday movements that are natural and organic, focus on the healthy longevity of the body and mind.

Helping of Hurting?

Often when we encounter an older adult who appears confused or withdrawn we automatically assume that they are exhibiting signs of dementia. However, this is not always the case. Polypharmacy is a word used to describe a situation where a senior is taking four or more prescriptions at any one time. Many seniors with multiple health conditions are in fact taking many more than four prescribed medications. Matters can be further complicated if a senior is seeing multiple physicians all prescribing medications for various ailments. If there is no communication between these health professionals the results can be fatal. Dangerous drug interactions can cause a host of health complications and even death. Communication and organization are key in preventing a po-

tentially dangerous combination of drugs or hazardous dosages of potent medications. Be sure that all of your doctors are aware of exactly what medications you are taking and in what dosages. It's also important to take great care to take only what medications have been recommended for you and in the manner prescribed. Below are some important issues in determining your risk for overmedication and what you should be doing to minimize and potential problems.

You should ask your physician or a clinical pharmacist to perform a comprehensive medication review if:

- You take five or more medications, or 12 or more drug doses each day.

- More than one physician regularly prescribes your medications, or more than one pharmacy provides them.

- You take several medications and have had falls, insomnia, incontinence, or changes in mental status; generalized symptoms such as dizziness, fatigue, swelling, or muscle or joint pain; or gastrointestinal problems.

- You start a new medication and a side effect occurs.

To make the most of a review:

- Take notes, ask questions, and (if you're accompanying an older relative) be an advocate if needed.

- Bring a list of medications, along with their strength and dosage. Include OTC drugs, vitamins, and supplements.

- Explain that you would like to consider reducing or simplifying your or your parent's medications. List your specific concerns — potential side effects and interactions, or the impact of drugs on quality of life. The physician should respect your concerns and goals; if not, get another opinion.

- Ask whether any of the medications are ineffective, unnecessary, or potentially dangerous.

- Inquire about changes in exercise, diet, sleep, or stress management that might enable you to reduce medication.

On Behalf of all at Chicago Irish Immigrant Support I would like to wish the readers of IAN a very happy, healthy, and successful 2015!



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pH Factor

By Pat Hickey



Why are 'they' closing so many Catholic Schools in the inner-city? They Tell Me . . .

I read a recent Letter to the Editor here. The writer wanted to know "Why are only inner city Catholic Schools being closed?"

They tell me that inner city Catholic schools are closed, because the schools were not 'run like a business.'

Can I get a "Harrumph!" Yeah!

So, they're telling me, Catholic schools are like carburetor factories? There are no carburetor factories, because they don't make carburetors anymore, because all cars now use fuel injectors. Now, as far as I can tell they are still turning out Catholics and they are turning out people of different faiths who admire Catholic education – you know minorities like LeBron James, Kareem Abdul Jabar, Will Smith,

Statement by President on Agreement in Northern Ireland

I and Vice President Biden welcome the news from Belfast this morning that the political parties of Northern Ireland, together with the governments of the United Kingdom and Ireland, have reached a broad agreement that paves the way for the continuation of Northern Ireland's governing institutions. Just as importantly, the agreement also enables further progress on dealing with the issues of the past. I congratulate all the leaders involved who, once again, have

shown that when there is a will and the courage to overcome the issues that have divided the people of Northern Ireland, there is a way to succeed for the benefit of all. I look forward to the final ratification of this agreement by all the relevant parties, and to the continued advancement of a peace process that is leading to a better future for the people of Northern Ireland. I also want to thank Gary Hart for his hard work in support of this agreement.

and Barack Obama.

They say if something is important, they will fund it. Who they are remains a real head scratcher for me.

"They" is the most important pronoun in our culture, because, I hear what "They" say about everything. They say that in a few years there will no longer be any Catholic school. They are the same anonymous persons or fact sources who reported that "They say, Leo High School was about to close on the following occasions:

1. When St. Leo Parish relinquished control of school and turned it over to Office of Catholic Schools

2. When a black kid enrolled in 1961

3. When Shewbridge Field was sold by Cardinal Cody to Chicago Board of Education

4. When more black kids enrolled and enrollment dropped to 800 boys in 1967

5. When the Irish Christian Brothers quit in 1991 and enrollment dropped to 300 boys and by 1999 no white boys attend Leo

6. When Bob Foster became the first lay Principal in 1991 – 'Foster won't last six months' they all said.

7. When Cardinal Bernardino started closing schools and parishes at the same rate of speed that Mayor Richard M. Daley closed neighborhood saloons

8. In 2009, when President Bob Foster retired – Leo could never survive without Bob Foster, they all said

9. In 2010, when Dan McGrath took the job as President of Leo High School, They said, "He's No Bob Foster; He's a Newspaper Man!"

10. Only this morning, they told me Leo was closing, again.

Schools close, because they are no longer important. "Oh, but they are.' They all say. They always say that a school should be run like business. Really?

Schools are only a business if they make money for someone. Public Schools and Charter Schools are businesses – the former is a government business and the later is a semi-gov-

ernmentally funded For-Profit business. Charters make money for Noble Street, Perspectives, Chicago International, Edison and Concept Charter Schools Incorporated.

Catholic Schools were a means of maintaining the Catholic faith and were generally administered by individual parishes, or religious congregations. Catholics schools are operated by tuition and fund-raising. If tuition and fund-raising goals can not be met, the doors get nailed shut until the property can be sold to some Charter School corporation.

Charter Schools are Catholic School re-enactors in outer department: school uniforms some conduct management initiatives (kids can get expelled), and somewhat lower pay than doled out to public school teachers. Religious instruction, iconography and metaphysics are forbidden, until after school hours and then largely ignored.

Public and Charter schools are secular – God isn't welcome – much too divisive and intolerant.

Catholics schools are operated by tuition and fund-raising. Most Catholic schools have very high tuition. Because nuns and brothers no longer work as teachers and lay people expect to be paid a salary of sorts and health insurance for singles and pay-to-play health insurance if a Dad or single Mom with kids. Some Catholic school, like Leo High School, operates as mission schools.

These schools are inner city schools and most of the students are financial strapped – poor, qualify for government free lunch programs. All are in need of financial assistance. Some can barely make minimum monthly tuition payments. One single Mom makes a total of \$ 400 per month from which rent, food and utilities fly out of pay packet before it is opened. Some might argue, "Well, that is why there are public schools." True. However, public schools have metal detectors, Safe Passage volunteers, security and Chicago Police officers, because they also

have the Mickey Cobras, Four Corner Hustlers, Stones, GDs/BGDs, Vice Lords and Latin Kings. So, do Charter Schools and Magnet Schools. Catholic schools have gang-bangers only until they surface. Impoverished Moms want an educational environment rooted in Christ, but can not afford anywhere near \$7,000.

A school is not a business, if it is rooted in Christ's message from the four Gospels and remain true to its historic blue-collar working stiff past.

Public Schools get a massive infusion of cash just for reporting opening day attendance numbers. A Catholic school gets a massive infusion of cash when a successful Alumnus of that school makes a drop, because the school is doing for his grandkids, exactly what it did for him. A Catholic school without legacy attendees swims against roaring revenue currents.

A businessman will say, "Hey, time to retool! Have Marketing survey done by a reputable firm; conduct a complete financial audit and pay down all debt, get rid of top salaries veteran teachers and maintain top quality standards and instruction, get more foundation funding, buy glossier marketing materials, get more students to attend a landlocked facility in Chicago's most dangerous neighborhood."

Sounds great! That will cost us somewhere in the neighborhood of \$500,000.

(The sound of crickets chirping.) Our business man considers, "Boy, that is a great deal of money."

That's business all right.

They tell me that it is impossible for Leo High School to continue. I hear that.

Smashing links:

<http://www.nbccongress.org/resources/print/catholic-education.asp>

<http://educationnext.org/can-catholic-schools-be-saved/>

http://hepg.org/her-home/issues/harvard-educational-review-volume-67-issue-1/her-booknote/growing-up-african-american-in-catholic-schools_21

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Sat 3rd - Celtic Power Trio 9:30pm
Fri 10th Anniversary Hooley 9:30pm
Sat 10-10th Anniv Hooley 9:30pm
Sat 24 Butterfly Swindlers 9:30pm
Sun Jan 4 & 11 Storytelling 8pm
Sun Jan 18 - Folk Music
Every Mon - Mudflapps 8pm
Every Tue - Sessiun 7pm
Every Wed - Family Day Kids eat free
Every Wed Moira's Afternoon Tea 2pm
626 Church St. 847-864-1679
CelticKnotpub.com

Glenview

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1740 Milwaukee Ave
847-699-9999
johnnysglenview.com

Indianapolis

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317-964-0990
nineirishbrothers.com

Lafayette

9 Irish Brothers (West)
119 Howard Ave 765-746-4782
3520 ST Rd 38E 765-447-0999
nineirishbrothers.com

Oak Forest

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Sun 25 - Tribute to Phil Durkin 2pm
Sat 31 Merry Ploughboys 7:30pm \$20
Sun 2-1 THE BIG GAME \$35 Open bar from Kickoff to final whistle!
Sat 2-7 St. Jarlath's Dancing for the Stars 6pm Tx online \$15, \$20 at door
Sun 2-15 Bridal Boutique 12-3pm \$5
Sat - 2-28 Wolfe Tones 7pm \$25
Mon - Set Dancing 7:30 pm
Tue - Ceili Dancing 7:00 pm
1st Weds Month Musical Luncheon

Oak Forest

In the Carriag Pub
Sat Jan 3 Richie Z 8:30pm
Fri 9 Gerry Haughey 7:30pm
Sat 10 Billy O'Donoghue & Larry Nugent 9pm
Fri 16 Joe Cullen 7:30pm
Sat 17 Bernie Glim & Country Roads 8pm
Fri 23 Joe McShane 7:30pm
Sat 24 Nicky G / Sandy Lee 8pm
Fri 30 Gerry & Kara 7:30pm
Thursdays Irish Musicians Traditional Sessions
6119 W 147th St 708-687-9323
chicagogaelicpark.org

Oak Lawn

Clancy's
Sessiuns Tu, We, Fr, Sat.
4624 103rd St 708-422-1110
eatatclancys.com

Orland Park

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708-226-9600
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63 W Ontario

Chicago

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Sat 1/10 St. Patrick's Fathers
Fri 1/16 Joe McShane
Sat 1/17 The Dooley Brothers
Fri 1/23 The Boils
Sat 1/24 Cash for Kids, 6pm
Fri 1/30 In Spite of Ourselves
Sat 1/31 Rico Quinn
Jan 23 - Willis Clan in Concert 8pm
Jan 24 - Johnny Cash Festival 6pm
Fifth Province Pub
4626 N Knox 773-282-7035
irish-american.org

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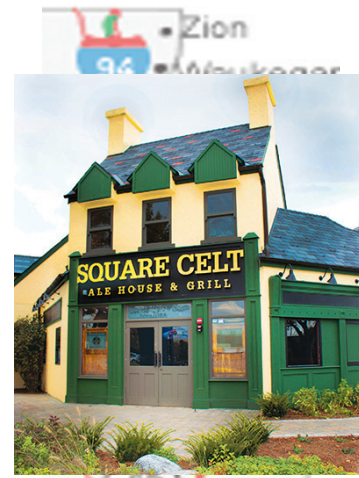
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It's the New Year, time to turn over a new leaf.

For me, that means making a confession to you, dear readers.

For the past year, I've been sharing stories with you about food, culture and how to make this and that. What you don't know is that I am, in fact, afraid of my own oven and have not used it since I moved into my apartment more than five years ago.

You're probably wondering how I feed myself. I do so by using the stovetop and my crock pot (I don't have a microwave either).

It all started the first time I tried to use the oven, during the first week we moved in. While it was heating up, I pulled out the broiler drawer to see gas flames extending down, just centimeters from the linoleum floor. It startled and frightened me so much that I immediately switched off the gas, never to turn it on again.

The gas company sent someone to look it over, this intimidating beast, and they did so thoroughly, staring it down, noting there's nothing wrong with it. This oven certainly isn't about to burst into flames, like Moses' burning bush, even though I fear it might at any minute.

It is old, though, this oven of my nightmares. The knob that is supposed to indicate temperature is arbitrary and regularly falls off. The heat it generates, which I discovered the first time and only time I had it on, sets off our smoke detectors, making me question where the fire might be.

At work, I'm the butt of jokes. Once my colleagues discovered my fear, they offered to stage an "oven intervention," almost like the reality TV

shows where women are restyled or hoarders are saved from their self-induced plight. I know this fear comes from inside. The oven is a symptom, not a cause of this real, but irrational dread.

All in all, it's a very silly state of affairs. I hope that with this official resolution set, I will be able to overcome my fear of this oven without going up in flames. All the dishes I love and miss cooking, Shepherd's pie, Midwestern casserole, whole roasted chicken, pork tenderloin, and want to share with you are tied up in this mess.

And so, as I raise my glass, warm from a hot toddy, a perfect cocktail for a cold January evening, as I say a silent goodbye to my oven fear and hope for the best the next time I switch on the gas.

Hot Toddy

Saviors of the kitchen-phobic, Hot Toddies are sophisticated and comforting, and most importantly, involve minimal interactions with flame or potentially hazardous machinery.

2 shots Irish whiskey
8 oz. boiling water
1 slice lemon

4 cloves, insert into lemon slice
Sugar to sweeten (optional)

Combine all ingredients in your favorite mug and enjoy!



Steep Theatre Midwest Premiere of Life and Sort of Death of Eric Argyle

by Ross Dungan

Directed by Jonathan Berry

Getting hit by a truck was startling enough, but two days after his death Eric Argyle began to discover the profound impact of his seemingly inconsequential life. Ross Dungan's delightfully inspiring story illuminates the power of

the stories we tell about ourselves and poses the question, "is there such a thing as a small life?"

"an ingenious experience! Only those with a heart of stone could fail to be moved by a story that suggests no life is completely wasted."

- The Guardian

Steep Artistic Associate and Jeff Award-winning director Jonathan Berry returns to Steep to direct Dungan's heart-warming and magical exploration of lives lived without regret. The Life and Sort of Death of Eric Argyle opens at Steep Theatre on Thursday, January 22.

The show premiered in Ireland in 2012, produced by 15th Oak. The production enjoyed enormously successful runs at both the Dublin and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals, before transferring to London's Soho Theatre and New York's 59E59. Eric Argyle was nominated for Best New Play at the Irish Times Theatre Awards in 2013 as well as the Stewart Parker Trust Award. Mr. Dungan won a prestigious Fringe First award for his first play Minute After Mid-day. He is one-third of the hugely successful Irish sketch-comedy group A Betrayal of Penguins and currently writes for RTE's Fair City and Roy, as well as for a number of projects for Tilted Pictures.

Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights at 8pm from January 22 through February 28. Sunday matinee performances are scheduled for February 1, 8, 15, and 22 at 3pm. Tickets range from \$10 to \$35. Reservations can be made by calling (866) 811-4111 or by visiting www.steeptheatre.com. Steep Theatre is located by the Berwyn Red Line stop and is within blocks of the #92, #36, #146, #147, and #151 buses.

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It Starts With A Song

By Joe McShane
and Margo O'Donnell



her name up on YouTube. I feel I have to mention her because its very, very seldom someone puts the feeling into a song like this wonderful woman did.

If you listen to her sing "Sweet Memories" you will know what I mean. People like her are very rare.

This months song is one I wrote with my cousin Pat Touhy (Chicago) and my good friend James Thacker (Nashville). Pat has always been good with words and just a wonderful human being. We were talking one day about how little things in life can mean so much. So we started writing the song "Just One Single Rose". In the middle of our writing it we decided that for some reason firemen never really get mentioned in song, at least not very often. Even though they put there lives at risk everyday. I have a cousin named Mike Bush on the southside of Chicago, who is a retired fire chief and he was known for doing a lot of courageous deeds. He was stationed in Englewood for his last few years on the force. So we put our thoughts on paper and the song was borne.

I mentioned in last months column that we would be running a historical, musical etc, trip to Ireland. We will have more details about it at a later date.

Song writing tip - I mentioned last month about writing some hook lines (titles) down. You can never have too many of them. Later go back to them and write loads of short lines about the subject without trying to rhyme them, until you have a lot of info. It will also get you thinking. Songs come along from inspiration sometimes, but other times you just have to do a little work to make it happen. When you are writing a song for a particular singer or subject, this method works very well.

Happy New Year everyone!

From our family to yours,
Joe and Margo

Hi Everybody,
Once again Christmas is over and our New Year has begun. I hope everyone had a happy and peaceful Christmas and may 2015 be good to one and all. My Christmas was quiet and lonesome as it was my first Christmas without my dear Mother R.I.P. She was my best friend but I know she is happy with my Dad and God in Heaven.

From September 2014 until September 2015 I am celebrating 50 years in my Music career. I have done 10 special concerts that led up to Christmas and they were so extra special. It was wonderful seeing all those familiar faces that always came to my shows in the past. They really came out in force and I felt such great love all around me. I will do four or five more concerts in the spring and summer and some other special things. I will finish my year in Killarney in August. At which point I will sit back, rest and take a look at what may lie ahead. There is talk of my book "The Promise & the Dream" being adopted into a movie, so who knows what's around the corner.

Happy New Year to each and everyone - once again, over to you Joe.

Thank you Margo,
We all wish you and Daniel and all your family a very "Happy New Year". Daniel was over here last November doing his annual shows in Branson, and some other shows here in America. That's great news about your book maybe hitting the movie screens. We wish you great success with it.

Soon I'll be heading over the ocean again, to do a few shows. I'll be there for 2 weeks mid-February. One weekend in England playing Blackpool and Leeds and also one weekend in Ireland in Galway and Mayo. I had a great time last year meeting up with people I hadn't seen in a lot of years. There was also many friends from Chicago that were home on holidays at the same time. So it was great to meet up with them at home. I really enjoyed my gigs there. But the most special part of my trip was to see my son Declan get to bond with his relatives and watch him playing along with them. Of course when he met them he kinda dumped me. Ha! Ha! But I was glad to be dumped for such a good reason. He now has another place to call home.

Country music lost another great singer on December 11th. Dawn Sears R.I.P. If you have never heard her sing you could put

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"Just One Single Rose"

Written by Joe McShane, James Thacker and Patricia Touhy

- Verse 1 A boy heard mom and dad say happy anniversary
He looked a little puzzled and it was plain to see
He wondered why one flower so they told him he should know
The reason why his daddy gave Mom a single rose
- Verse 2 When your Dad and I first met he handed me a rose
A simple loving gesture with hopes that it would grow
They took him to the garden his sister by his side
Be patient Son his Momma said each time that he'd asked why
- Chorus You kids may not have noticed all these roses here before
But we know someday you'll find someone and plant a whole lot more
The scent was all around where those flowers bloom and grow
All the love out in that garden began with just one single rose
- Verse 3 You see those pink and red ones ? we planted them with Love
For the time you and your sister were sent from god above
And just behind them two more grow there colors white and blue
For your grandma and your grandpa that had so much love for you
- Verse 4 The boy said to his Daddy his words a little scrambled
I saw them colors in the glass case shape like a triangle
You know the one with strips and stars a medal at its side
It says Grandpa was a fireman, who bravely gave his life



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Administrative Relief is Here!

As you may already know, on November 20th, 2014 President Obama took executive action to amend several aspects of our immigration laws. Among these new policies, there are two deferred action programs that may benefit certain undocumented members of our community.

The first is an expansion of the already existent Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). The new policy changes three things. First, it moves the entry date requirement from June 15, 2007 to January 1, 2010. This means that future applicants need to show that they entered the U.S. prior to January 1, 2010. Second, it removes the age cap. This means that applicants need no longer have been born prior to June 15, 1981, that is 31 years or younger in June 2012. Now so long as an applicant meets all other eligibility requirements, his or her age in June 2012 or at the time of application does not matter. Finally, it extends approval and work authorization to 3 years. Up until now, DACA was valid only for 2 years.

All other DACA eligibility criteria remain intact. The changes will become effective within 90

days of the announcement, or in late February 2015. DACA applicants lodging applications prior to that time will not benefit from the above.

The second is the creation of a new program for the parents of U.S. citizen (USC) or lawful permanent resident (LPR) sons and daughters (DAP). In order to be eligible, an applicant on November 20th, 2014 must

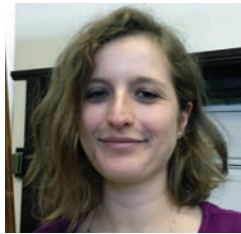
- Be without lawful status, i.e. his or her visa or visa waiver had expired, or she entered without a visa
- Have a son or daughter who is a USC or LPR of any age, married or unmarried;
- Be physical present in the U.S., as well as on the day when he or she applies for this program;
- Have continuously resided in the U.S. prior to January 1, 2010;
- Not be an enforcement priority; and
- Not have any discretionary factors that make the grant of deferred action inappropriate.

DAP approval will be valid for 3 years and potentially entitle approved applicants to a work

permit and the ability to travel with advance permission. The cost will be \$465. DAP applications should be available within 180 days from the announcement, or in late May 2015.

Another of the new memoranda unifies the enforcement priorities of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) across all applications. It prioritizes in three tiers the type of criminal and immigration offenses that should receive the most attention when the various agencies that make up DHS (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Customs and Border Patrol, and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services) decide who to apprehend, detain, or remove from the country. Level 1 includes people involved in terrorist activity or who pose national security risk; caught immediately at the border; convicted of felonies or "aggravated felonies"; or convicted of a gang crime or intentionally participated in an organized criminal gang to further the illegal activity of gang. Level 2 includes those convicted of three or more misdemeanors; convicted of a "significant misdemeanor" (e.g. domestic violence, sexual abuse, burglary, DUI); caught after entering unlawfully and came after January 1, 2014; or who "significantly abused" visa or visa waiver systems. Level 3 pertains to people ordered removed on or after January 1, 2014.

If you fall under any of these categories, it is imperative that you speak with an experienced immigration attorney or accredited representative. Even if you do not, but have had interaction with police or immigration authorities, it is advisable that you seek legal advice prior to applying. Remember: there is nothing to apply for right now! So, if anyone asks you to sign any forms or pay them money to work on your application, they are scamming you. For more information, check out our website at www.ci-is.org or call 773-282-8445.



Raia Stoicheva

A Word With Father Boland

The Voice of Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Chicago

Reverend Michael M. Boland

Administrator, President and CEO



"We Are One Family Under God." That is the theme of the 2015 National Migration Week (January 4-10), established 25 years ago by the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops to highlight the Church's teaching on migration. As our nation becomes increasingly polarized over immigration reform, perhaps we can use Migration Week as a turning point to open minds and hearts so that we may become the welcoming nation that God calls us to be.

The theme We Are One Family Under God beautifully and powerfully reminds us that no matter what our country of origin, we are all brothers and sisters in Christ. As our Holy Father, Pope Francis, so eloquently stated: "Every human being is a child of God! He or she bears the image of Christ! We ourselves need to see, and then to enable others to see, that migrants and refugees do not only represent a problem to be solved, but are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected, and loved."

Welcome, respect, and love are things that Catholic Charities is truly blessed to provide thousands of immigrants who seek our help each year. We welcome them at our doors and resettle them in communities where they become our neighbors; we respect the many talents and traditions they bring from their homeland to enrich our nation; and we show them love through the many services they receive from Catholic Charities as they work very hard to establish their lives in America. Whether it's help with legal paperwork, learning English, finding employment, or meeting basic needs, Catholic Charities has helped weave newcomers into the fabric of American society for nearly 100 years.

Jesus taught us to care for the most vulnerable and weakened among us, and very often that means our brothers and sisters who have traveled from their native lands to make a better life in our country. Just as the Holy Family

was forced to flee their homeland, most refugees and immigrants come to America out of necessity—they are persecuted, face escalating violence, or simply cannot find jobs in their own countries and desperately need work to support their families. In fact, the need for survival is so great that many immigrants are willing to expose themselves to perilous conditions, sometimes falling prey to human trafficking and smugglers engaged in violence and extortion, in order to find safety, protection, and employment in the United States. We as Christians and Americans offer solidarity and hospitality to those who are forced to take such drastic steps in order to preserve their human dignity and human rights.

Unfortunately, we are living in a time when our current immigration system is extremely outdated and makes it exceedingly difficult for foreigners to come here legally and provide the labor that our country needs, for families to stay together or be reunited, and often results in tragic and preventable violence and loss of life at our borders. Each day, Catholic Charities witnesses terrible suffering when parents are deported from their children, spouses separated from each other, and victims cope with the repercussions of physical and financial abuse that too often accompany immigrants' road to the United States.

Catholic Charities is proud to stand with Archbishop Cupich and the bishops of our nation in calling for comprehensive immigration reform that strongly protects our national interests, but also reflects the Gospel message of Jesus and the values of our Catholic Social Teaching. As our country debates this controversial topic, it is my hope that our Catholic voice can be the tender reminder that immigrants are not a problem to be solved, but our brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected, and loved. After all, We Are One Family Under God



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Celtic Lacrosse Open in Ireland July 2015

Global Football will return to Ireland next year, but will champion a different sport as teams participate in the three-day 2015 Celtic Lacrosse Open at the University of Limerick with the finals being played on the Fourth of July.

Global Football has partnered with Ireland Lacrosse, the sport's national governing body, to organize an exciting new tournament, which will feature teams competing in Under-19 and Open divisions.

"We are eager and excited to work with Ireland Lacrosse on what promises to be a fantastic event," said Global Football President Patrick Steenberge. "The two successful GIFT American football events we held in

Ireland in 2012 and 2014 created a wealth of contacts, partners and friendships that we are delighted to rekindle as we continue to focus on the Emerald Isle for some of our most prestigious events.

"Lacrosse is a sport growing rapidly in popularity in North America and players will have

a great opportunity to showcase their talents in Ireland and also enjoy a fantastic visit overseas. It is refreshing to have the national governing body of a sport embrace our initiatives as we are accustomed to in so many other countries, and recognize the opportunity to further develop lacrosse in Ireland."

The GIFT tournaments produced by Global Football in Ireland, the latest in association with the Croke Park Classic, brought 14 teams, more than 2,700 visitors and drew in excess of 12,000 spectators to games played at University College Dublin, Donnybrook Stadium, Parnell Park and Pairc Tailteann.

Ireland Lacrosse Chief Executive Officer Michael Kennedy said: "Lacrosse was first played in Ireland in the late 1880s, between Canadian and U.S. exhibition teams, so we are excited about connecting with our history of the game here by once again welcoming teams from North America. When I met Patrick at the World Championships in Denver this past summer, I was impressed

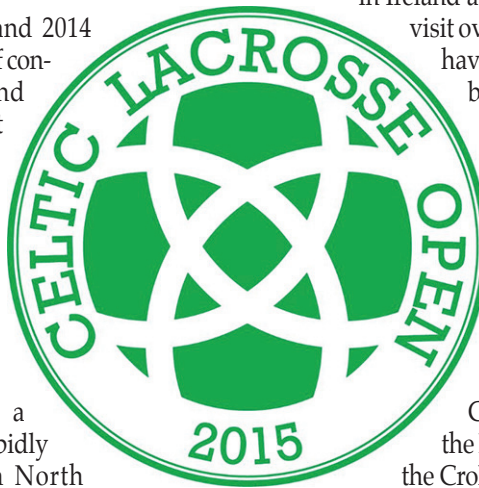
by his experience, and look forward to working with him and his organization to help attract players, coaches and teams to Ireland."

Ireland Lacrosse works to develop the sport throughout Ireland for men and women at all levels from youth to adult, while managing, overseeing and supporting the Irish national teams (men's senior, women's senior, men's U-19 and men's indoor).

The teams traveling across the Atlantic will depart on June 30 and will hit the practice field at the University of Limerick the following day to prepare for three days of lacrosse action, which kick off on Thursday, July 2. The finals of the 2015 Celtic Lacrosse Open will be played on the Fourth of July and participants will then join the city of Limerick parade to celebrate the traditional American holiday.

While visiting Ireland, the touring players, coaches, families and friends will visit the spectacular Cliffs of Moher, The Burren and Galway, tour historic Croke Park, learn Gaelic games at University College Dublin and enjoy a Dublin city tour, including a visit to the Guinness Storehouse. They will return to North America on July 8.

Players and coaches wishing to participate should contact Global Football President Patrick Steenberge: Tel: 817-219-7274 / Email: Patrick@GlobalFootball.com.



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Boru's Brew

Brian Boru is the new kid on Madison Street's Irish pub strip in Forest Park. Molly Malone, the ample-breasted fishmonger is now replaced by a true soldier of destiny, the only man in history to achieve, for one glorious decade, the dream of millions long since: a united Ireland. We spoke with Mark McGready, who opened the new venue along with partners Greg Marcy and Dennis Garrison in November.

Mark was born in a small thatched farmhouse in South Derry County where his family has lived some 300 years, near Slieve Gallion Mountain and the Tyrone border. "My dad finally got electricity in 1969 so he could watch the moon landing" said Mark, who at the age 18, eager to see the world, left home for Edinburgh University. In so doing he helped ease the regrets of his father, who at age 11 turned down an opportunity to leave home for secondary school, instead taking a job in a local store. "He didn't want me to stay in the area and do what he did. As soon as I could, I was off to Scotland to study. Then I was in England for a year. Then I came to the States. And now I run a software company."

In February when Molly

Malone's was on the market, his friend and business partner urged him to 'come have a look at this'.

"The biggest thing when I moved to the States was: back home you knew everyone, you were able to talk to everyone; you were talking to people of all backgrounds and all levels. Whereas in my corporate world I was kind of removed from the community in a large part... and I liked the idea of getting into this business to reconnect a little. So, I had a walk around. It's a really nice building. It's got a lot of opportunity. I like this place because of the capacity for parties and events and doing community outreach.

"To me, bars are integral to the community; and it's a very nice thing to be able to pay back to the community in some way. In Ireland in particular, if you owned a bar, it got you connected to the community in a different way- that I wasn't- and I missed that."

Mark resides in in Naperville, close by some 200 restaurants but says: "none of them would offer what I'm going to offer here." He envisions Brian Boru's as not just a regular bar, but "more of a building that can be used as a com-

munity center or town hall, that sort of thing. I started dreaming of holding 'wish drives' or other things that would happen back home... the kind of community place where 50 or 60 people can come together. The States isn't really good at that, particularly out in the suburbs...

"The other thing I'm trying to do is to work on the food. I find a lot of the food in America to be not that wholesome... the chain restaurants. And when I go to Irish

One of the things I liked about it was reconnecting with Irish history... Brian started the O'Brien's, but he was also one of the guys who started the tradition of Irish surnames carrying on after generations. Previous to him, for most of the guys in the countryside, you took the name of your father, as in Scandinavian countries. Brian was a Kennedy (his father was Cennéig mac Lorcaín) but when he died, his grandson was given the name O'Brien, and that continued.



bars in particular, I'm kind of disappointed in terms of what they're offering as an approximation of the Irish food experience. Even though Ireland is not particularly known for its food, anyone who has gone there for any length of time knows that they eat pretty well and they have nice, nourishing and straightforward meals. So I wanted to replicate that in the menu here... more the traditional menu that you get back home. I think there's not a lot like that in the States".

"There's a whole bunch of reasons why we called it 'Brian Boru'.

My own surname, McGready ties back to a man named Grady who fought with Brian Boru. And when I learned the story of Brian it kind of fired the imagination that there's all these Mc's and O's in the world and they're all named after one guy who started it. So, one of the ideas we have for the snug room is to make it a surname room, to feature Irish surnames."

Upstairs will be rooms called 'the tower', 'the priory', and 'the ring fort'. The round tower will relate to Irish monasteries. The priory celebrates Irish scribes and

the Book of Kells. And the theme of the ring fort room will be those forts which later developed into Irish cities. "It will be a bit more than a bar, touching to some extent on the history of Ireland".

"The size of the building and the opportunity for events and parties is what makes this building stand out. As someone who's moved on from partying every night to being settled down and having a family, this is the kind of place I'd like to have close by.

"Irish bars occupy a unique position in that you should feel safe if you bring your family. So, if you have a couple of little kids and you want to take them out to dinner, you can bring them to what is essentially a pub, and you can have a beer. But at the same time it's not going to be loud, a lot of swearing, fighting... like you get with sports bars or other places."

Mark feels the biggest thing with trying to replicate a pub in Ireland is that: "there shouldn't be an expectation that you go in there to drink... it's basically more of a place where you meet with your friends. We are aiming to make it more of that kind of place."

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Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle



Serial Hope

Over the past few weeks I've been fortunate enough to have time to watch an inordinate amount of British/Northern Irish television. Of course there is the usual dramas, period and otherwise, and the funny and irreverent Graham Norton,

One series, however, that has grabbed my attention, and millions of others, is *The Fall*. Set in contemporary Belfast, this crime thriller deals with actions of a serial killer. This may sound strange, if not ironic, but one man's fantasies of torturing and killing women in Belfast give the city a refreshing sense of normality.

Whenever Belfast is mentioned, you automatically think of the Troubles, accompanied by thoughts of sectarianism and religious conflict. Belfast is synonymous with terrorism, and civil unrest. News items regularly report on the dissident IRA, controversial marches, or discord between political parties. The idea of a serial killer who is not motivated by religious partisanship is a welcome departure from the usual rhetoric of Unionism and Nationalism.

The series, written by Allan Cubitt, stars Gillian Anderson (X files fame) and Jamie Dornan (soon to play Christian Grey in the adaptation of *Fifty Shades of Grey*) manages to avoid, for the most part, the political divisions and presents us with a crime thriller that successfully normalizes Belfast in the most bizarre but entertaining way. Belfast, in this story, is not dominated with questions of the Northern Irish State, but rather the predatory actions of an apolitical murderer.

Obviously, if you set a drama in Belfast you cannot avoid the Troubles entirely. East and West Belfast are full of visual reminders (political murals) of the conflict. There isn't a part of the city that does not have something that evokes a sense of the recent past, and yet, in this story, it does not dominate the narrative. There are occasional scenes in which the camera catches a mural or an acronym for a paramilitary group, but the general feeling is that Belfast is like any other city in the world, where civil crime, devoid

of political motivation, happens all the time and that's the beautiful irony of this work.

The series, now in its second season, is not without flaws in the plot. With four episodes into second season two you get the feeling that writer is stretching the whole thing too far. While you can believe that the police force can and does overlook the most obvious clues, the story reduces to them to being absolute buffoons, and this requires a lot from the audience. Hiding in plain sight is one thing, but to endow this attractive, devoted father and ruthless killer with the power of a Svengali over everyone he meets elevates his stature to that of a demonic messiah who appears untouchable.

But despite what seems like holes in the plot, the story keeps us watching simply because we invest ourselves in the rich depictions of the characters. As each layer is peeled away, and each personal story evolves, we find complexity followed by complexity, so that each character is, like ourselves, a mass of contradictions. Some of their stories parallel, or 'mirror' each other, and this adds depth to the each of the subplots.

The killer becomes a catalyst to the unmasking of others. His deplorable crimes are juxtaposed with others less morally reprehensible, such as adultery and a corrupt police force. The gap between the murderer's crimes is lessened as we discover the potential to cheat, lie, and thwart justice in those who appear on the right side of the law.

Anderson and Dornan both radiate a charismatic power over those they encounter. Cubitt gives us a woman whose need for power, and control over others, especially men, is delivered through a philosophy of a 'sweet night', a casual sexual encounter. She is sexually as predatory as Dornan. Anderson's character, Stella, objectifies her sexual partner, in the same way as Dornan's character, Spector, objectifies women. The difference lies in crossing the line, the thin line between exploitation and murder.

Both Anderson and Dornan keep us watching as they play a game of cat and mouse, each wondering who is the cat and who is the mouse. As we become immersed in their story, and those around them we begin to see how Belfast is moving away from its recent past, and becoming less one dimensional; a backdrop now to stories other than the conflict normally associated with it. What Cubitt has successfully achieves in this series is nothing short of 'brilliant'.

I watch the P.S.N.I (Police Service of Northern Ireland),

not as the arm of British imperialism but as a body of law and order. He allows me to see Belfast as a city like any other city in the world, not as a political landmine waiting to explode, and for this I wholeheartedly applaud him.

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