

Brave Leaders of Chicago Gaelic Park Go BIG, so Someone Can Go Home!

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CELEBRATE GROUND HOG DAY ALL YEAR AT THE CHERRY TREE INN . . PG 52

IRELAND NETWORK'S IN SPIRIT AWARDEE 2024 MICHAEL CLUNE . . PG 22

O'KELLY'S GOURMET BAKERY/RESTAURANT OPENS IN BEVERLY . . PG 28

SARAH SMITH, DIR OF MARKETING FOR CHICAGO BULLS . . PG19



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The Win a Chicago Home Raffle benefitting Gaelic Park Charities is heading toward the finish line. Buy your \$100 ticket now for your chance to win a custom-built, modern, high-end home (\$650,000 est.) or a cash prize of \$450,000 at the Grand Prize Drawing on March 24, 2024! Quality schools, beautiful parks, and other amenities are within walking distance of the Sawyer Avenue home. Echoing the words etched into the Chicago

Gaelic Park dedication monument, "Once a Dream, Now a Reality," the raffle home is ready to make someone's dream come true! This is all thanks to the vision and talents of a legion of Chicago Gaelic Park volunteers and tradesmen.

The raffle takes its cue from house raffles in Ireland, which have been successful fundraisers for Gaelic Athletic Association clubs and county boards. The raffle beneficiary, Gaelic Park Charities, is the nonprofit arm of Chicago Gaelic Park dedicated to preserving and promoting Irish heritage and culture. The GAA is a





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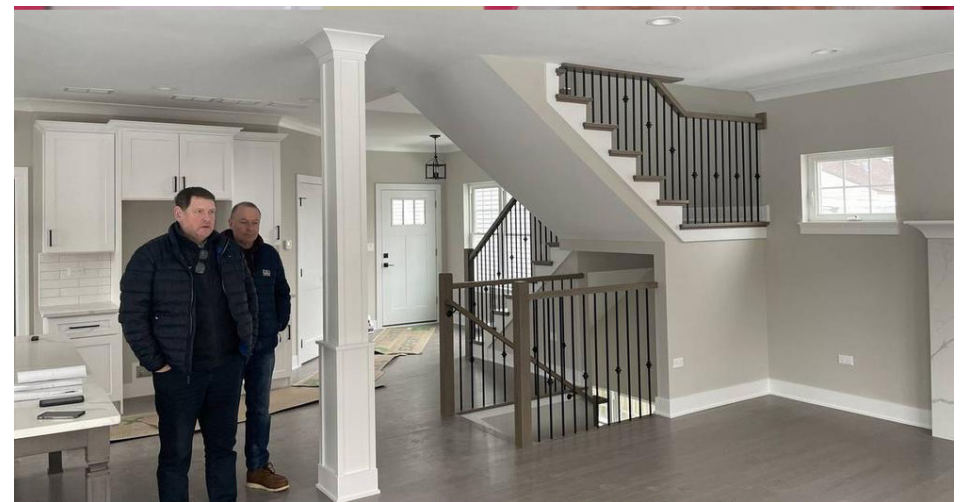
key part of this cultural component as Gaelic Park is home to 15 Chicagoland clubs. To ensure the continued vitality of the GAA at Gaelic Park, raffle proceeds will be used to redevelop the GAA grounds and improve the adjacent parking lots. Raffle proceeds will also be used to strengthen Gaelic Park's cultural heritage programs.

The raffle's Early Bird Draws offer chances for bonus prizes, so the sooner you enter the better! The current Early Bird prize is a fantastic Ireland Golf Getaway worth \$6,000. One lucky Early Bird purchaser will win 4 Roundtrip Airline Tickets to Ireland and a Round of Golf for 4 at Trump International Golf

Links, Doonbeg, with One-Night Luxury Hotel Stay. Set on the dramatic Atlantic coastal dunes of County Clare, Doonbeg features an 18-hole championship course designed by Greg Norman. The Ireland Golf Getaway Early Bird runs through March 10th - South Side Irish Sunday at Gaelic Park!

To purchase your Win a Chicago Home Raffle ticket, visit ChicagoGaelicParkHouseRaffle.com, call 708.687.9323, stop by the GP Front Office, or mail in your \$100 check to 6119 W. 147th Street Oak Forest, IL 60452.

-Noreen Lennon Hegarty, Maureen Gill O'Regan, John Conroy & Mark Flynn



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Irish American Hall of Fame Announces 2024 Class of Inductees

The Irish American Hall of Fame announced its 2024 Class of Inductees - six outstanding Irish Americans who have made significant contributions in their fields. The inductees and one "Hometown Hero" will be honored at the Annual Irish American Hall of Fame Awards Gala on April 27, 2024 at The Irish American Heritage Center on Chicago's Northwest side.

Now in its 12th year, The Irish American Hall of Fame is national in scope and operated under the auspices of the Irish American Heritage Center. Over 100 nominations were considered from throughout the U.S. and a rigorous screening process applied to name the final six inductees.

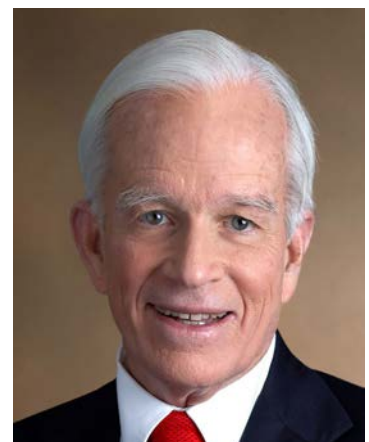
Following are the 2024 Irish American Hall of Fame inductees and Hometown Hero. Full bios may be found at <http://iahof.org>.

Arts & Humanities:
Edward Ward



Ed Ward (1945 - 2019) was a trailblazer who left an imprint on the Irish-American community. He is best known as the driving force behind Milwaukee Irish Fest, the largest Irish music fest in the world and Irish Fest Foundation. He also started the Ward Irish Music Archives, the largest collection of Irish sheet music, wax cylinders, recordings, and movies in North America.

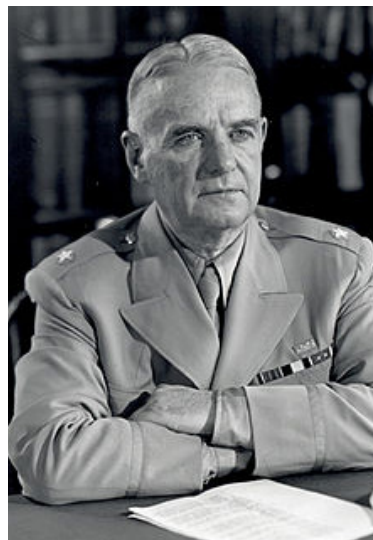
Business & Industry:
Andrew McKenna



Andrew McKenna (1929 - 2023) was among Chicago's most consequential business leaders of his day. He served as Chairman of McDonald's Corporation, owned Schwarz Supply Source, was a director of Ryan Specialty Group, the Chicago Bears Football Club and Skyline Corporation. A tireless advocate for the community, he served in leadership positions with the Ann & Robert H.

Lurie Children's Hospital, Big Shoulders Fund, Ireland Economic Advisory Board, and Lyric Opera of Chicago, among others.

Public Service:
William Donovan



William Joseph ("Wild Bill") Donovan (1883 - 1959) was a United States soldier, lawyer, intelligence officer and diplomat. He is known as the "Father of American Intelligence" and the "Father of Central Intelligence." Donovan is the only person to have received the four highest awards in the United States: the Medal of Honor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, and the National Security Medal.

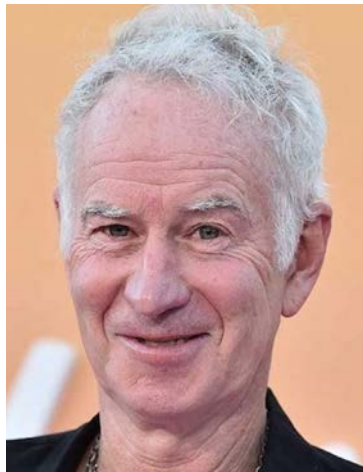
Religion:
Sr. Patricia Crowley, OSB



Sister Patricia Crowley, OSB (1939 - 2023) dedicated her life to serving people experiencing homelessness and working for

many social justice issues. She was the oldest daughter of Patrick and Patricia C. Crowley, founders of the Christian Family Movement. She served as Executive Director of the Howard Area Community Center, Executive Director of Deborah's place and served as Prioress of the St. Scholastica Benedictine Priory in Chicago and from 2012 to 2016 as President of the Conference of Benedictine Prioresses.

Sports: John McEnroe



John McEnroe is a former World No.1 professional tennis player. He was known for his shot-making and volleying skills, his rivalries and his confrontational on-court behavior. McEnroe is the only male player to simultaneously hold the world No. 1 rankings in both singles and doubles. He finished his career with 77 singles titles on the ATP Tour and 78 doubles titles, the highest men's combined total of the Open Era.

Science:
Joseph P. Kerwin, M.D.



Joseph Peter Kerwin, M.D. is an American physician and former NASA astronaut. He was the first physician to be selected for astronaut training and served as a crewmember of Skylab 2, the first crewed mission to Skylab, the first American orbital space station. He is one of the inventors of the Simplified Aid for EVA Rescue, or jet pack system worn during space walks.

2024 Hometown Hero: The Hagerty Family

For Over 65 Years, the Hagerty Irish Hour has kept Chicago connected to the Old Country, sharing Irish music, news, and interviews and serving as an open forum for the Irish community. Created in 1953 by Jack Hagerty, Sr., the Hagerty program is the longest running Irish-oriented radio show in the country. Jack Sr. hosted the show every morning until his death in 1980. Since then, all six of Jack's children -- Denise, Donna, Jack, Ed, Tom and Jim -- hosted the Saturday morning show at one time or another.



The Irish American Hall of Fame (IAHOF) aspires to preserve and promote the stories of the Irish in America and the ongoing links between Ireland and the United States. The Hall of Fame was founded by members of the Chicago-based Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC). While the Hall of Fame is an organization born of and operated under the auspices of the IAHC, it is overseen by a separate governing committee and has a national focus.

Founded in 2010, the IAHOF inducted its first honorees in



Jack, Denise and Edward Hagerty

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March 2011. As of 2023, a total of 101 Irish Americans will have been inducted into the Irish American Hall of Fame. To see the full list of prior inductees and learn more, visit www.iahof.org.

About the Irish American Heritage Center: Founded in 1976, the Chicago-based organization is one of the premier Irish cultural organizations in the United States. It is a destination for people of Irish descent as well as those who wish to learn more about the Irish heritage. Learn more at www.irish-american.org.



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Currently, Judge Carolyn Gallagher

is a Cook County Circuit Court Judge assigned to the Probate Division, and the Supervising Judge of the Surety Division.

Previously, Carolyn was:

- an Appellate and Trial Lawyer in the Federal and State courts,
- a Legal Writing and Research Instructor at DePaul University College of Law,
- a Judicial Law Clerk in the Illinois Appellate Court, and
- a volunteer lawyer with the Expungement Summit, the Chicago Legal Clinic, and New Health Foundation Worldwide.

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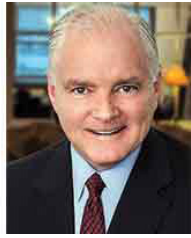
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engaged in work on the highway. The speed limit is typically reduced in construction areas and stiff fines can be imposed for speeding in a

construction zone to keep our workers safe.

Additionally, our legislature has already imposed restrictions on the use of cell phones, including text messaging, in construction areas.

The construction site itself can also be the cause of motor vehicle accidents. Vehicles entering or leaving the highway from a construction site can be the cause of serious accidents.



These vehicles do not use typical entry or exit lanes, and thus can create a problem for other drivers. In one case prosecuted by our office, a semi-truck abruptly stopped in traffic on the tollway in response to a signal by a flagger on a construction site to allow a truck to pull into one of the sites entrances. As a result, a vehicle behind the semi-truck also braked suddenly and was rear-ended causing significant injury.

If a construction company is negligent in controlling traffic around its work site and an accident results, the responsibility may flow to the construction company. The Illinois Department of Transportation, the Tollway Authority and other governmental entities have issued regulations and guidelines for construction companies operating near highway traffic. When an accident occurs near a construction site, these guidelines may determine whether the construction company is responsible.

Workers' compensation claims for construction workers

Construction workers also have a number of remedies if they are injured while working. Primarily, a construction worker who is injured while working has the right to file a claim pursuant to the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act. Under the Act, a worker is entitled to receive 2/3 of his average weekly wage, tax free, while he is unable to work. This is referred to as temporary total disability benefits, or "TTD."

A worker will also receive all reasonable and necessary medical care related to his injury, as long as he stays within the chain of physician referral. This medical care must be paid for out of the employer's workers'

compensation insurance, and should not be processed through the employee's regular health insurance. Notably, the employee is not responsible for paying any co-pay to the doctors, hospitals or therapists who treat him.

Depending on the severity of an employee's injury, they will have other rights under the Act as well. If the employee is unable to return to his former occupation because of an injury, the employer may be required to hire a professional job counselor to help the employee find suitable work. If the only available work is at a lower rate of pay than the worker was earning before the accident, the employer may be responsible for paying 2/3 of the difference between the employee's current pay and his pre-accident pay. This is known as a wage differential. In the most extreme cases, where an employee is unable to return to any work in any capacity, he may be entitled to TTD benefits for the rest of his life.

Similarly, in another case, recently filed by our office, an individual was injured while on the job. As a result of his injury he was unable to work in the same occupation he held at the time of his injury. He was not assisted in obtaining new employment, as required by law. As a result of life-long employment in a labor-intensive job, he faced difficulty obtaining other sustainable employment. After a trial on the issue, he was eventually awarded assistance in finding new employment with the help of a vocational counselor. Additionally, he was awarded his 2/3 pay, while out searching for a new position, known as maintenance benefits.

Some benefits are limited by the Act. For instance, in most cases the employer will not be responsible for paying any "fringe benefits" for the employee, such as health insurance, union dues or pension benefits. Also, if the employer can accommodate the employee's physical restrictions, the employee must accept modified work from the employer.

For example, after an injury many employees are returned to work but the doctor tells the employer that the employee can only lift up to a certain weight restriction, such as ten pounds. For construction workers, this will likely mean they will be unable to return to their old job. However, the company may still take the employee back to work in a modified capacity, and give him a job as a watchman or a flagger. In most situations, the company can even change the shift or hours that an employee works. What the company cannot do is change the rate of pay the employee receives. It must either pay the employee their old wage, or pay a differential

as described above.

Injured workers' may also have other claims

In addition to workers' compensation claims, an injured construction worker may have other claims. For instance, if a construction worker is struck by a car while working, he will have a workers' compensation claim against his employer as well as a potential lawsuit against the driver who struck him.

A common situation arises on a jobsite with multiple contractors. When an employee of one contractor is injured because of the negligence of another contractor, the employee may be able to file a lawsuit against the other contractor. Often times this occurs when one contractor negligently leaves debris or material out on a jobsite, causing an employee of another contractor to fall and sustain injury. Likewise, this situation presents itself when one contractor fails to secure building materials properly. If a worker is subsequently injured because of falling materials, a lawsuit may be a possibility.

Furthermore, the general contractor on a jobsite may be responsible for overall safety and cleanliness at a construction site, and may also be liable if a subcontractor negligently creates a dangerous condition.

However, a lawsuit generally will not be available when one employee is injured because of the negligence of another employee from the same company. Under that circumstance, an employee's "exclusive remedy" is a workers' compensation claim.

Although none of us enjoy sitting in construction traffic, construction is a way of life and a vital necessity to our economic and infrastructures development. Unfortunately, with construction can come dangerous situations. As can be seen from just this brief description, who is at fault for these accidents, and what an injured person is entitled to as a result of these accidents, is dependent on the factual situation of each case. If you are injured as a result of a construction accident you should contact an attorney as soon as possible to discuss what benefits may be available to you.

Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon Law Firm is comprised of seven trial attorneys and four "Of Counsel" attorneys, two of whom are from Ireland. We are located downtown at 111 W. Washington Street, Suite 1425, Chicago, Illinois 60602 (800-922-4500 or 312-977-0100) (overlooking Daley Center). www.HealyScanlon.com. The firm concentrates in the representation of injured victims of all types of accidents.

Readers are encouraged to call or write with questions concerning personal injury law.

This is the next of a series of columns on how the law can impact your life. The articles will focus on various aspects of the law relating to personal injuries, those that happen both on-the-job and otherwise, including mishaps which occur in driving vehicles, using products, and receiving medical care. The column will also respond to legal questions relating to personal injury that are sent to us.

The New Year Brings New Construction Projects

by Neil Schelhammer

Despite the recent snowfall and cold temperatures, local construction projects continue. We just recently saw the first of a three-phase project on the Kennedy Expressway completed in December. Kennedy inbound lanes and ramps have fully reopened, and the next phase involving the reversible express lanes is set to begin in March.

Along with this, there is an abundance of increased activity in planning future construction projects and construction currently underway, not only

on our roadways. The sight of our growing skyline continues with a new 74-floor building at 1000 S. Michigan Avenue having been recently topped out and set to open later this year. Unfortunately, with increased construction projects there is always an increased risk of accidents and injuries.

Construction injuries on the highway

As previously mentioned, a lot of the construction that has begun in the Chicagoland area in addition to new buildings is highway construction. Our already congested highways have been further strained by decreased lanes in many areas and increased traffic due to construction workers. When lane configurations are changed from the usual pattern, a distracted driver may leave his lane of travel, possibly resulting in an accident.

The increased construction traffic can be dangerous for both drivers near construction sites and for construction workers on the highway. Noteworthy, the Illinois vehicle code requires drivers to yield the right of way to any construction workers

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The Voice of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago



Students Put Faith into Action with Catholic Charities

by Lisa Roti

Catholic Schools Week (January 28-February 3, 2024) gives occasion to celebrate the wonderful partnerships between Catholic Charities and Catholic schools across the Archdiocese. Our partnerships are truly reciprocal—students have the opportunity to put their faith into action while we are blessed to get much-needed volunteer help for our programs. When they volunteer with us, students not only learn about the challenges faced by those seeking assistance, but also begin to understand why helping others is such a central part of the Gospel message.

2023, nearly half of all families (47%) struggle to afford clean diapers for their infant or child. Families struggling to make ends meet often have to cut back on other essentials like utilities and food to afford diapers.

Sometimes parents and caregivers resort to delaying diaper changes, reusing soiled diapers, or using paper towels or newspapers. If babies sit around in dirty diapers, they can develop rashes and other infections, which are not only painful, but can lead to costly doctor visits and loss of work for parents. In addition, when parents bring a child to daycare, a full day's supply of diapers is required. If they don't have the diapers, then they can't take the child to daycare, go to work, or earn money to support the family. Students learned how diaper needs can quickly spiral into very negative physical, emotional, and economic consequences for the child and the family.

One example of this is Catholic Charities' partnership with St. Patrick School in Wadsworth. We've had the honor of hosting their annual Day of Service for the past two years. At last year's event, we had the students help with our Diaper Depot, a diaper bank that distributes about 200,000 diapers each year to 15 nonprofit partner organizations in Lake County.

Equipped with this knowledge and inspired to put their faith into action, the students from St. Patrick's School got into teams and began unpacking large boxes of donated diapers into smaller packs of 25 and 50 that could be distributed to families. They had a great time working together and successfully packed enough diapers for a month of diaper distributions!

The project was an excellent way to introduce the students to a critical need in our community, while also engaging them with the core values of our faith tradition.

At the end of the day, the students felt great about what they had accomplished and Catholic Charities was grateful for their help. As one parent chaperone remarked, "These service days are so important because they teach the kids to give back to the community."

We started the day with a prayer and then watched an inspiring video from Pope Francis. He stressed that the world needs volunteers committed to working together for the common good. Volunteering "means being an artisan of mercy—with our eyes, with our hands, with an attentive ear, with our closeness," he said. We used this as a framework for a discussion about the Corporal Works of Mercy and why it's so important to help our neighbors.

Catholic Charities is blessed and humbled to work with students and school groups across the Archdiocese. This Catholic Schools Week, we celebrate and welcome all young people to join our mission of charity, as we witness a message of mercy and hope to a world in need.

We then began talking about the project at hand—packing diapers for the Diaper Depot—and that affording an adequate supply of diapers for babies and young children is an acute problem for many families. Students were shocked to learn about this "silent crisis" in their communities. Diapers are expensive and their cost has risen, just like the cost of food.

For more information about Catholic Charities Diaper Depots, including volunteer opportunities, please contact Lisa Roti, lroti@catholiccharities.net (Lake County) and Brittany McGhee, bmcghee@catholiccharities.net (Cook County).

According to the National Diaper Bank Network, diaper need has risen sharply in recent years. In

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 Monday tour to Fallingwater and Kentucky Knob



Save the Date: West Side Irish Events!

St. Patrick's Day Parade
Saturday March 9, 2024, 10am
https://www.wsirish.org/content.aspx?page_id=0&club_id=555725

The West Suburban Irish invites you to celebrate the good deeds of St. Patrick at the Irish Mass. It's a beautiful service in the Irish and English languages. St Thomas the Apostle Church, Monday, March 11, 2024, 6:30 p until 8:00 p
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www.naperhurling.com to learn more about these great games!

Irish Session
Warm your heart and join us for a casual gathering of musicians playing traditional Irish music on their traditional Irish instruments. You'll hear live reels, hornpipes, slip jigs and all your favorite trad Irish tunes. Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 7:00 PM until 8:30 PM

Quiz Night is open to WSI members and non-WSI members alike. Which means everyone is welcome to play. Check out the Quiz Night webpage (under EVENTS on the above menu bar) for question categories and rules of the game. Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 7:30 PM -9:00 Quigley's Irish Pub
43 E. Jefferson Naperville, IL 60540 www.quigleysirishpub.com



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An Irish Complex

By Thomas O'Gorman



the Notre Dame Inn in Chicago. You found a financial rabbit hole and glued yourself to it. It's the story of a generation of wise Irish young sportsmen.

Irish life in Chicago is generational. It comes and goes in bits and pieces. Wrapped in an ancient faith. Festooned in an arcane political/cultural dynamic without seams or room to turn.

athlete. P.J. chose to leave Ireland and emigrate to the United States, Fully embracing the full specter of Irish sports in Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York, even becoming proprietor of the Notre Dame Inn in Chicago for many years.

P.J. began an enigmatic engagement of all things Irish in Chicago. Not hard for a leprechaun to do in a city of floats and Irish marching bands. Parades. Self-serving politicians. And glib trade unionists happy to engage the workers of local labor. He became as much a piece of the local soil as grass at Soldier Field. But still rough work for the unpolished sports star. But P.J. was a never say die, in your face, self-promoter, confidently pragmatic among the 600 parishes and Catholic schools. Becoming a bridge among community neighbors and low-key Chicago Irish organizations,

P.J. was Chicago's original "unmade" Irish bed. His flexibility with common English vernacular at times may have been challenged and tested. But never his Irish. Never his wild County Clare version of English. A language that often became his best ally in public speaking and crowd control.

I always thought P.J. a grand man with a song. He looked as if all music was fresh-made for him. All the loves, heartaches, jigs & reels, Hornpipes and ballads of war, joy and faith. Not easy to do. But that was just it. P.J. had that look that he could accomplish it all.

(Header picture of Irish Botannicals from the Abess' Garden, Kylemore Abbey, Galway, by TJ O'Gorman)

P. J. O'DEA: Poetic Patriot

*I will arise and go now, and go to Inishfree,
And a small cabin build there of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean-rows I will have there, and a hive for the honey-bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.*

Lake Isle of Innishfree WB Yeats

This Inishfree of which the Irish poet W.B. Yeats sings is not far from the ancestral home of the O'Deas. Within the confines of the western shores of County Clare. Rich. Wet. Tribal. Mysterious. It's no accident that it was P.J.'s home land.

"The Man from Clare" as he was known.

Where can we stand if not beside our own shadow.

Where can we live if not beside our own courage.

Where can we be tested if not beneath the hammer of our own mad Hurley stick.

That's neither advice nor prediction. Just cold

Irish logic in America as the curtain rose on Cold War living in the 1950s. Whether you were the towel boy at the New York Athletic Club or the manager of



PJ and Mary O'Dea with Stephen Mullen (center)

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Life among the Irish in Chicago has always had the peculiar ability to grind up the ground on which we stand into a fine pulverized version of reality. It's the great equalizer. Balancing all details. Like a recipe scribbled on a match book.

It's how Irish life was made livable in American cities for the newly arrived Irish during the 1950s, a period of unusual immigration and cultural awareness. No one demonstrated that quirky, split, eager embrace more than P.J. O'Dea. A man hatched in Shannon-side character, but with both fists open to the promise of America.

P.J. was legendary. Shaped from mythic formulas concocted in the ecstasy of his sports success. Invention in operation until he tipped at 98. Always known as "the man from Clare", as if he came wrapped with bubble gum. P.J. Stretched himself, playing his Irish games for 2 sports clubs. In 11 cities. In four countries. His first county medal (Clare) awarded to him in 1939 following Ireland's version of the world series. By 1951 and 1952 he was kicking footballs for the Mighty Irish Munster football pros. Winning Ireland's version of the Series MVP.

P.J. was Ireland's great sport's star and, to tell the truth, Irish Football's poster boy for his purity of heart and purpose. In America he would have been on a cereal box. But in poverty-employment ridden post World War II world of low expectations it was no place for a young

*When my arms wrap you round I press
My heart upon the loveliness
That has long faded from the world;
The jewelled crowns that kings
have hurled in shadowy pools, when
armies fled;
The love-tales wrought with silken thread...*

"He remembers Forgotten Beauty" WB YEATS

Because so much drama and emotion transfixed the eye of Ireland's poets in the emerging past of the new Ireland, we, like P. J., stand surveying the measurement of heaven writ large upon the sobering flesh of human striving. P.J. leaves a wife, a native of Tuam, Go. Galway who nursed him till the end. Content to follow his frugal funereal plans with little room fore show-boating or exaggerating good deeds. So we are to reconcile our life of prayer with God's mercy,

There, the pieces of our living adhere to each other like an antiseptic triage of hope ripe with survival.

P.J. O'Dea lived long, near to the gates almost of a century, where the waves of friends and foe rubbed away alike, well cleaned by passion carving, handshake close.

*When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;
When you are Old WB Yeats*

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Irish History in Chicagoland September 1980 from the pages of *Irish American News*



... 'It Will Never Be The Same' In September 1980, Jack Hagerty, longtime host of the Hagerty Show was remembered with reverence upon his passing, I am presuming by then Publisher, Bob Burns..

(Cliff Carlson, publisher 2024) Jack started the Irish Hour in 1953. Since his passing his children, Denise, Ed and Jack have continually done the show which is now in it's 71st year at WPNA 1490 AM in Oak Park, Illinois from 9am to 11am every Saturday. "SATURDAY MORNING-IT WILL NEVER BE THE SAME." "A big part of my Irish identity has passed with the loss of Jack Hagerty. It has been he who has given me my knowledge of the Irish and the spirit of my Irishness."

Jack Hagerty, after 30 years of being the most prominent Irish radio personality in the Midwest, is dead. His passing is

mourned not only by his devoted wife Arlene and their six fine children, but the passing of Jack Hagerty is also a vital loss to the entire Irish community.

This beloved Irish-American has served as the voice of the Irish almost continuously since World War II. He has brought identity to the Irish in the missions. He has been the greatest provider of public service announcements. He has praised and he has scolded. He has pleaded and he has cajoled. He has inspired those who hesitated. He has supported those who have failed. He has entertained as a step-dancer and a "great Irish talker" when he was called on to do so.

The Chicago Irish community has suffered a deep loss. And they now join in the prayer which he has sought so fervently on the air -

"Pray for me and my family."



Emmett and Katie Fitzpatrick welcomed their newest family member, Mary, born on Wednesday, January 17, 2024. Mary is shown here with her built in protection squad, (l to r) Thomas and Rory Fitzpatrick! All in the family are feeling blessed.

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A Touch of Ireland Has New Owners

A Touch of Ireland has been in business for over 50 years. It's located in Oak Lawn, Illinois and is conveniently located just blocks from the 294 tollway. Owners Annie Cremins and her daughter in law Katie Cremins work both at the store and bring the store to Irish Dance Feisannas as well as local Irish festivals.

The store carries a wide variety of Irish goods. Irish sweaters in all different styles and colors and for all ages. Waterford Crystal, Belleek China, & Galway Crystal are all available. A

large selection of Irish themed clothing for children including Christening outfits & Aran sweater baby blankets. The store also carries county rugby jerseys for both adult and youth. The store carries a large variety of Irish Dance apparel and accessories including socks, leotards, skirts and all brands of Irish dance shoes. The store carries a large selection of Irish jewelry as well as religious medals and rosaries. The store's annual sweater sale starts February 15th with 20% off until St. Patrick's day. The sale is in store only. 6761 95th St, Oak Lawn, IL 60453 <https://touchofireland.co>



Margaret Walsh (seated) and Annie Cremins

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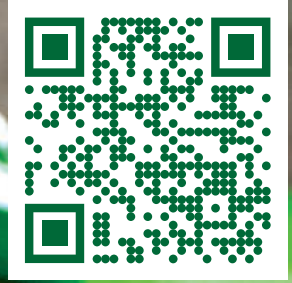
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Terry From Derry

by Terry Boyle

Human Condition

Meditatio by Ezra Pound

*When I carefully consider
the curious habits of dogs
I am compelled to conclude
That man is the superior
animal.
When I consider the curious
habits of man
I confess, my friend, I am
puzzled.*

There is no doubt that the history of humankind is puzzling. Our struggle to survive as a species has taken us to the brink of annihilation on more than one occasion. We've faced the void of our own extinction and somehow managed to come back from the edge. Just what miracle of common sense prevailed when we looked into the abyss is still puzzling to me. For some, it could be interpreted as the grace of God, for others a matter of pure luck but for me, it's just downright puzzling.

If we were to believe the endless conspiracy theories on social media we'd be consumed by despair. Our paranoia heightened to the point of distrusting

everyone and everything, we would isolate ourselves from all reason and fact. The world of social media is littered with landmines of non-fact, designed to detonate and destroy our trust in any objective reality. Those who perpetrate these erroneous ideas know the human psyche very well. They understand and prey on our uncertainty in order to destabilize our belief in democracy and belief in human goodness.

Ezra Pound, the author of *Meditatio*, was something of a puzzle himself. Apart from his creative abilities as a poet, he inspired and encouraged a whole generation of literary artists, including James Joyce. He can be credited with pushing the boundaries of modern literature. Yet, despite being a muse for modernists, he shared anti-Semitic sympathies and was a lover of the Italian dictator, Mussolini. There is much to despise about Pound's politics and yet he personifies the very puzzling

thing about human nature that fascinates him, namely contradiction. And, while his genius inspired many notable writers to radical experimentation (works that we now value as timeless classics) he also justified tyranny and prejudice. The irony of the *Meditatio* is that it is this contradiction in Pound's character that I find puzzling.

We don't need to look any further than our television screens or newsfeeds to hear the same contradiction being echoed in the mouths of politicians soliciting votes. They praise their agendas while denigrating anyone who opposes them.

This particular facet is part and parcel of the political debate, which I can accept, but when it comes to fearmongering then I suspect something more nefarious is at work. When a politician starts promoting the white privilege agenda, you know they are attempting to engender a view of racial diversity that is almost apocalyptic. The outcome of such rhetoric usually results in acts of violence against racial minorities. Mosques, synagogues and other places of cultural difference become targets for this hatred.

What seems to work in tandem with this burgeoning bigotry is the fight 'to bear arms'. Even though gun violence continues to make this country a dangerous place to be, some ignore the facts and argue for even greater weapon power. Children are not safe at school. They are not safe in their homes where guns are readily available, and yet the increasing number of deaths due to gun violence is brushed aside. It's a fact that there are more guns in this country than there are people. It's also a recipe for disaster to have people so worried about their welfare that they have to go out and get a gun to protect themselves. By making it so easy to arm yourself, you also make it easy for the person who would use that weapon to cause harm. Reason would suggest that by having greater gun control you lessen the chances of gun-related crimes. We only have to look at other countries that have implemented rigorous policies to

know these measures work.

The greatest weapon is language. The language of those in power can either create unity and celebrate diversity or it can work to destabilize a society. In recent years, we've seen the former president use language to create distrust, venerate blind obedience, undermine the judiciary and encourage acts of violence. The words of one man in a place of power can do much more harm than a gun. Years after inspiring an insurrection, we are still dealing with the fallout of his inflammatory language. He has created a cult based on fear, suspicion, and division. Unlike the poet Pound, this former president has done nothing to inspire anything good. There is no contradiction in his practices. He has attempted to defraud on his taxes, and make money from gullible supporters without offering anything meaningful to the country.

There are times in our history when all hope was lost, and still, we continue. We have looked into the abyss and still crept away from the edge. I wonder if it will be so for us in the future. I wonder how long it will take for us to see the light when it comes to climate change. Will we ever learn that our actions have global consequences? Can we change our behaviour before it's too late? Or, is it too late already? I have lots of fears about where we as human beings are going. As the weather patterns change, and become more unpredictable, we are facing an unknown future. Against a tide of false information readily available on social media, we're seeing a greater polarization between fact and fiction. The language of the day decries the best in us and validates our worst traits. We've traded openness and honesty for xenophobia and fake news.

What saved us in the past from destroying ourselves, whether it be the grace of God or luck, I hope it will once again bring us back from the brink of destruction and offer us another opportunity to get it right. Maybe it might be a case of reaching our 'rock bottom' so that we can get along together and work towards a global sense of community that is not afraid of difference.



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The Month of March at CGP

We're Irish 365 days a year, but March is always a special month around here. Join us!

Parades

All are welcome to march with the Chicago Gaelic Park community this March! Our float will be in the Oak Forest parade (Saturday 3/2), Tinley Park parade (Sunday 3/3), Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade (Saturday 3/16), and South Side Irish Parade (3/17). We will offer transportation to and from the start and end points of the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade and South Side Irish Parade. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @ChicagoGaelicPark for more details.



Ireland on Parade

Ireland on Parade is an exhibition of the music and dance of Ireland that takes place at Gaelic Park annually over a 10-day period in March leading up to St. Patrick's Day. Various Irish step dancing schools from the entire Chicagoland area are featured each evening of Ireland on Parade. Musical entertainment is provided by the Irish Musicians of Chicago, an organization which consists of local artists who are dedicated to the perpetuation of traditional Irish music. Join us March 4-8 and March 11-15! Doors open at 5:30pm.

Concerts

The Brothers Gibb embodies the spirit and energy of the legendary Bee Gees. From the high falsetto voices to the pitch perfect soaring harmonies, The Brothers Gibb will take you on a complete journey through the Bee Gees entire catalog and career on Friday, March 1st.

Get ready for a Celtic journey as **Green Road**, the sensational Irish folk and ballad band from Co. Wexford, takes the stage on Saturday, March 9th.



South Side Sunday Sunday, March 10th

Start the day with our monthly Mass followed by a traditional Irish breakfast. After that, doors open at 1pm for a full day of South Side Irish fun! We have entertainment in each room that includes favorites like **St. James Gate**, **Kieran Byrne**, **Doonaree Pipe Band**, **Gotham Ramblers**, **Gerry Haughey**, **The Larkin & Moran Brothers**, and **The Fenians!** There will also be children's entertainment on-site.

St. Patrick's Day Weekend

Our annual St. Patrick's Day Luncheon will be held on Saturday, March 16th. We have **The Galway Gals** and **Cross Keys School of Irish Dance** on deck for an entertaining afternoon!

On March 17th, head on over after the South Side Irish Parade for a full day of festive fun. We'll have non-stop entertainment with **Kieran Byrne**, **Gerry Haughey**, **The Larkin & Moran Brothers**, **O'Leary's Lantern**, and **The Chancers**.



Hooley in the Park

Friday, March 22 - Sunday, March 24

We want to keep the fun going after St. Patrick's Day, so we're hosting a three-day weekend of Irish social dance and music. The weekend features, direct from Ireland, dance master **Gerard Butler** and musicians **Stuart Moyles** and **Jack Keogh**. Saturday evening promises extra-fun with local favorites like **Joe McShane** and **Myles McVeigh & The Hoyle Brothers** adding to the entertainment lineup. Hooley in the Park promises to be a great weekend in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere! Get your 3-day tickets at a discounted price when you purchase them before March 1st!

Stick around Sunday night for the **Win a Chicago Home Raffle** drawing! Cash bar.

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CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

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

A Chairde – Greetings from Gaelic Park

Two of our events in January were completely sold out – Women’s Little Christmas Eve and An Irish Heartbeat: A Musical Tribute to Van Morrison. Thanks to all who came out and made our January events successful. Those who couldn’t get tickets to the concert will be glad to hear that An Irish Heartbeat will be back here in August to grace one of our Irish Fest stages.

We begin February on St. Brigid’s day, which is considered the first day of spring on the Gaelic Calendar, and we’ll end the month on Leap Day. The old tradition of Leap Day (February 29th) being the one day that women can propose marriage hasn’t really held up, but if that happens to someone you know, please send them in to see our banquet pros. They’re great at taking pressure off newly engaged couples and helping them have their special day their way.

The Gaelic Park Players would appreciate your support at their All-Ireland Trivia contest on the 9th, and the next night CGP favorites and Dublin’s own The Merry Ploughboys will be back to see us. Did you know that they play 250 shows and draw 40,000 people per year at their pub in Dublin?

I’ve always been impressed with how the Irish community responds when someone has a critical need, and we see examples of that here on a regular basis. Most recently, we’ve seen the incredible activity over the past several months leading up to the Rally 4 Reynolds benefit. Congratulations to that committee for their stellar efforts, congratulations to the entire Irish Community for always being so supportive, and best wishes to the Reynolds family.

Is mise le meas,
Bill O’Sullivan

Upcoming Events

Visit chicagogaelpark.com and follow us on social media for more information on upcoming events.

- February 4th - RALLY 4 REYNOLDS
- February 6th - AUDITIONS FOR GAELIC PARK PLAYERS SHOW
- February 9th - ALL-IRELAND TRIVIA WITH THE GAELIC PARK PLAYERS
- February 10th - MERRY PLOUGHBOYS CONCERT
- February 11th - MASS AND IRISH BREAKFAST
- February 14th - GOLDEN GAELICS SENIOR GATHERING
- February 16th - FAMILY FEUD
- February 18th - CHICAGO IRISH SINGERS CLUB
- February 25th - SING WITH THE ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONS
- February 28th - GOLDEN GAELICS SENIOR GATHERING
- March 9th - GREEN ROAD CONCERT
- March 10th - SOUTH SIDE SUNDAY

Music at The Carraig

- February 2nd - WHISKEY & HARMONY
- February 3rd - DAMIEN PATRICK
- February 9th - ELROY ACOUSTIC
- February 10th - THE CHANGERS
- February 16th - BERNIE GLIM
- February 17th - KIERAN BYRNE
- February 23rd - GERRY HAUGHEY
- February 24th - KEVIN ROWAN



THE MERRY PLOUGHBOY CONCERT
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH



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Named after the ballad of the 1916 rebellion, The Merry Ploughboys are a traditional folk group from Dublin, Ireland, who have been “singing it like they mean it” for 30 years, with gutsy and engaging vocals backed by arrangements of fiddle, mandolin and guitar and often joined by uilleann pipes, whistle or tenor banjo.



Gaelic Park Players
ALL-IRELAND TRIVIA

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SUPPORT THE GAELIC PARK PLAYERS AND JOIN THEM FOR A NIGHT OF FUN AT THE ANNUAL ALL-IRELAND TRIVIA NIGHT!

\$60/TEAM OF 6.
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SINGLE PLAYER WILL BE PLACED ON A TEAM.



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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH AT 6:00PM

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Spectator tickets - \$10



Bob Barth, Elizabeth Barth, Aisley Houlihan, Maeve McTighe, Penny Brackin, Madeline McVeigh, Katelyn Crehan, Bridie Lynch, Patrick Doherty, Luke Duffy, Logan Duffy, Jack Bernal, Conor Bernal, Michael Conroy, Ciara Conroy, Brigid Conroy, and Brendan Conroy are the superstars gracing this month’s IAN cover with our Dream Home. Thank you to these GP kiddos (and their parents) for showing up on a bitter cold Saturday. Your enthusiasm encourages us to keep up our Raffle efforts. The future of GAA, Irish dance, and traditional Irish music at Chicago Gaelic Park is bright!!

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Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



permanently in Britain in 1962. From almost the first he was an outspoken critic of what he saw as Imperialist and Colonial Policy wherever he found it, making him unpopular in a lot of quarters. For example, he believed that it was a complete myth that his home country was a particularly brave one, that politically it was only a vague truth that the Australians stood up to Authority.

I need hardly add that such blunt attitudes in a world of craven forelock-tuggers made him many enemies and eventually limited the number of magazines and newspapers who were willing to print him ('New Statesman' being a particularly honourable

John Pilger was the real deal, someone who never backed down, no matter the cost to him.

Even in his eighties he never slowed and a flavour of his fearless writing style can be found as recently as last May, worth quoting for those who don't know him:

"Democracy is notional now; there is the all-powerful elite of the corporation merged with the state and the demands of 'identity'. American admirals are paid thousands of dollars a day by the Australian tax payer for 'advice'. Right across the West, our political imagination has been pacified by PR and distracted by the intrigues of corrupt, ultra low-rent politicians: a Johnson or a Trump or a Sleepy Joe or a Zelensky.

"...Tony Blair, a prima facie criminal under the Nuremberg Standard, is free and rich. Julian Assange, who dared journalists to prove their readers had a right to know is in his second decade of incarceration. The rise of fascism in Europe is uncontroversial... Ukraine as modern Europe's fascist beehive has seen the re-emergence of the cult of Stepan Bandera, the passionate anti-Semite and mass murderer who lauded Hitler's 'Jewish policy', which left 1.5 million Ukrainian Jews slaughtered..."

There's much more, but you get the idea.

John Pilger was a giant in the world of investigative journalism, yet I didn't see any of the normal 'Tributes poured in...' comments by the Usual Suspects. I did see this letter in a British newspaper, though, from a Keith Flett in Tottenham, London, who wrote:

"...Pilger was one of the greatest campaigning journalists of our times. His death brought many tributes, but not a word from Rishi Sunak or Keir Starmer. Proof that his journalism exposing the rich and powerful, their policies and motivations, made him persona non grata in

official political circles. A better epitaph there couldn't be'.

I suspect that a better epitaph he wouldn't have wished for.

*And now... [drum roll]:

"If you're as sick as a dog, you say, 'Darling, I gotta make it. Even if you vote and then pass away, it's worth it.'"

Donald Trump, urging his supporters on.

What about him, eh? You just can't write this guy off. You can cut off his head and stuff his mouth with garlic, before burying him at midnight at a crossroads with a stake through his heart, and he is STILL going to come back and plague his enemies.

A 30-point landslide in Iowa, taking 98 of the 99 counties and only losing that one by a single vote. Is this the same Trump that only three years ago designated the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen as Terrorists, only to have President Biden step in and overturn it, apparently in the belief that they are our friends? Yet...remind me, who are we fighting in Yemen now...? I'm confused. Surely Trump didn't get that right three years ago? I mean...

Iran is (to paraphrase Gore Vidal) the biggest threat to World Peace since Gaddafi, who was the biggest threat since Saddam Hussein, who was the biggest since Pol Pot, who was the biggest since Hitler, who was the biggest since Attila the Hun, who was the biggest since my terrifying Aunt Mavis.

Yes, I'm confused. But I'm not worried. Now that he's back, the Donald will sort it out. With the added bonus that he'll be cheesing off so many people. Once again two-headed calves will be born in the heartland and signs and portents seen in the skies. I've missed him. Then again, he was never really gone.

John Pilger wouldn't have been happy; but that's OK. I said I admired him; I didn't say he was perfect.

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John Pilger Leaves Building; Donald Trump Re-Enters It

!!!TRIGGER WARNING!!! The following article contains words that the Perpetually Offended may find upsetting. These are: Donald Trump (used in a positive manner). Have your Safe Space at the ready.

Here's an understatement for you: on December 30th, 2023 a notable man and journalist passed away at the age of 84.

Well, it's like saying that Van Morrison could knock out a decent tune or that Pelé was known to kick the odd football around. If you are under thirty and never heard of John Pilger, don't feel too bad, though. By the man's own admission, in his later years he was pretty much unemployable by the mainstream media, although that didn't stop him working and posting on his own blog.

Like most men and women of my age I first heard of Pilger in my late teens when he was working with the British Daily Mirror. He had posted war correspondence from such hot spots as Biafra, Vietnam and Bangladesh; but it was his extraordinary reports from Pol Pot's Killing Fields of Cambodia that really riveted me. As a fresh-faced, idealistic young man who still believed that bad guys got punished and that there was such a thing as Democracy, I could scarcely comprehend the horror that Pilger made so vivid.

And even with the power of his reporting, perhaps this would also have faded from memory, except that Pilger didn't leave it with just pointing the finger at a monster like Pol Pot. Rather he tied it in with a secret and undeclared bombing campaign against the Cambodian people,

orchestrated and conducted by President Richard Nixon and Nobel Man of Peace Henry Kissinger. And all of it hidden from the American public.

It led in turn to his remarkable 1979 documentary 'Year Zero: The Silent Death of Cambodia'. It's hard to explain to a modern



reader just how devastating was the effect of this film. Without ever a public appeal being made - and I don't believe that one was even considered - people were moved to donate amounts of money both large and small, arriving at the TV studios and eventually reaching the staggering amount of \$45 million. This was the power of John Pilger's reporting. And following it I read his articles and bought his hard-hitting books whenever one appeared.

Incidentally, despite his popularity he was sacked under the orders of the crook-swindler Robert Maxwell after that worthy bought the newspaper, something that made me like Pilger even more.

He was born in Australia and would go on to work in Italy before settling more or less

exception).

Don't imagine that I followed him slavishly, mind. I disagreed - sometimes vehemently - with things he wrote. For example, I didn't really understand the very high opinion he held of Julian Assange, someone I consider to be a bit of a smug-faced chancer. And I CERTAINLY didn't agree with his nonsensical description of Israel as an 'apartheid state', a demonstrable nonsense that makes my teeth ache -- especially as this is a blatant falsehood that is being once again trundled out in our time.

However, I didn't allow myself to be triggered and sent scurrying for my Safe Space just because someone I admired had a different way of thinking. Like most grown-ups I just shrugged my shoulders and felt bad that we couldn't always agree.

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becoming a marketing executive for Chicago's #1 sports team. **From Champaign to Chicago to the UK and Back** Sarah graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism. She shifted to marketing and

"We have a lot of history in our championships and our legacy," said Sarah. "From a marketing perspective, while we respect that, we are very future-focused. How do we drive the brand forward? We are always looking for that balance - a balance of history but also being relevant where we are now. It is a unique and fun challenge."

Chicago Bulls Marketing Powerhouse, Sarah Smith

What is most striking about Sarah Smith is not her impressive career as a young marketing executive, her success as a woman in the male-dominated world of sports, or the incredible speed at which continues to rise professionally. It is the humility she has when crediting her family and Irish upbringing for these achievements.

As Director of Marketing for the Chicago Bulls, Sarah leads the Integrated Marketing, Brand and Fan Development, Creators and Communities, and Basketball Programming teams with a focus on building and cultivating the brand's global fan base. A dual U.S.-Irish citizen with a deep appreciation for international culture, Sarah is uniquely suited to lead one of the most recognizable brands in the world, and demonstrates why she is the Marketing MVP of her hometown basketball team.

An International Upbringing

Sarah said she utilizes what she learned in her personal life - from her family and how she grew up - and applies that to what she does now. Her father, Rory Smith, is a native of Goatstown, Dublin. He met her mom, Mary, during a lad's trip to St. Louis. The Smiths were engaged in Dublin, married in St. Louis and moved between Ireland and the Midwest before settling down in the suburbs of Chicago with children Adam, Shane and Sarah.

"Being Irish was always something we talked about," said Sarah of her childhood. "My dad did a good job of instilling that in us. We understood our heritage and we'd travel back in the summers and for weddings. We spent a good amount of time there to get to know our family. Ireland was very present in our lives."

While Rory, one of five, is the only Smith sibling in the U.S., Sarah remains close with her extended family living across Ireland and England. These international connections shaped her early professional career and no doubt paved her path to

public relations and completed an internship at the U.S. Soccer Federation before landing her first job in 2011 at Allied Integrated Marketing in Chicago, where she served as a publicist for well-known movie studio clients like Lionsgate.

In search of a new adventure, she moved to London in 2013 and was hired by Harrod's, where she supported marketing initiatives within the corporate service department. "Harrod's is an iconic brand in itself," said Sarah. "It's half tourist attraction, half luxury retailer, with a strong heritage in England

Sarah's marketing efforts are designed to resonate with local and global audiences, regardless of wins, losses, trades or injuries. She cites an incredible statistic: "Less than one percent of our fans will actually come to a game at the United Center." With this in mind, her team is constantly crafting initiatives that will engage fans, regardless of whether (or how) the Bulls are playing and regardless of where those fans are located. "The Chicago Bulls is such a global brand. We have fans across the world, and we get to harness that and build communities across the world."

She continues to find parallels between the organization and her upbringing that have aided her in this process. For inspiration, it is no surprise that Sarah looks outside of U.S. sports to other brands, including European soccer clubs - she credits her dad Rory, an avid soccer and rugby fan, for this strategy.

A True Team Player

The "tell" of a true executive, Sarah credits the extraordinary influence of her department to a talented and diverse marketing team. She said the Bulls intentionally hire professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds, which enables the organization to make more well-rounded business decisions.

"Working for the Bulls, we feel a great sense of responsibility to uphold



and London."

While she enjoyed the experience and being near extended family and building friendships abroad, a job opportunity back home at the Chicago Bulls piqued her interest. Sarah began the interview process from England and officially started with the Chicago Bulls in August of 2015. Now in her ninth season, Sarah has worked her way up to Bulls management through a series of rapid promotions. Her work takes place in unexpected and exciting spaces both near and far from the United Center, as she fosters the Bulls brand beyond sports - to music, fashion, art and culture - within Chicago and across the world.

Crafting the Future While Honoring the Past

While the heritage of the Chicago Bulls remains unparalleled in the world of sports, much of Sarah's work focuses on creating and sustaining strategic initiatives that strengthen the Bulls brand for generations to come.

the brand. It is very important to us to have those high standards, and we try to instill that in our team and lead by example."

In addition to her day-to-day responsibilities, Sarah serves on the board of the organization's internal women's empowerment resource group, which works to cultivate development opportunities among women in the office and throughout the larger world of sports. "It is important that girls see that you can work in sports," she said. "The Bulls do a good job of fostering that sense of community - everybody is welcome."

Most Valuable Player

Sarah's respect for the Chicago Bulls and her experiences is a testament to her leadership style and accomplishments - and, of course, her family.

"My parents always did a good job of sharing stories and teaching us about our heritage. It was the right balance and the perfect combination." Now that is a winning record!

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**A Slap
Against Censorship**

Strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPP) are an instrument of censorship favoured by corporations and political groups to impoverish and intimidate their less well-endowed targets to prevent awkward questions and investigations. It is bullying with barristers. Proponents of SLAPP seek to

make their critics personally liable in courts. So, it is journalists more frequently than newspapers or television channels who are victimised. Some media organisations, particularly our national broadcaster, are quick to capitulate and pay big sums of money out of court.

A recent defamation case in Belfast, taken by Sinn Féin's Gerry Kelly against journalist/ author Malachi O'Doherty, has ended in deep embarrassment for Kelly and (though they will not admit it) his party. Normally, the verdict in favour of O'Doherty would have been the stuff of headlines in the dailies. What is different this time is the vehemence the 55-page judgement that accompanied it, and the political dimension that the judgement highlighted.

Gerry Kelly has written two books about his time in the IRA, one of which, *The Escape*, details his Long Kesh prison break in 1983. In the book, he described how a prison officer had been shot as the escapees broke out of prison. Kelly was accompanied by another escapee at the time, Bobby Storey, and there is an ambiguity about who shot the bullet: Kelly has been consistently reluctant to deny outright that he shot it. On August 19th, 2021, Malachi O'Doherty

gave an interview in which he said: 'Gerry Kelly MLA has spoken very frankly about shooting a prison warden in the head'. This caused Kelly to take a court case to defend his reputation with the argument that he has never admitted to shooting the prison warden, and that his book allows for the possibility that either he or Bobby Storey did it.

Master of Belfast High Court, Evan Bell, explained that in civil cases, such as this one, a lower bar of 'balance of probabilities', is required to make a determination. Judge Bell stated: 'Mr Kelly has failed to file an affidavit denying

**View
From Ireland**

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



that he shot Mr Adams', and that 'the absence of such an affidavit was sufficient for me to draw an adverse inference against Mr Kelly'.

Bell's judgement that elevated the case's importance because it lends authority and

prominence to a very widely held view that some Sinn Féin members attempt to use the law to silence their critics. He ruled that the case was 'an abuse of process' and had 'the hallmarks of a Slapp...initiated not for the genuine purposes of vindicating a reputation injured by defamatory statements, but rather for the purpose of stifling the voices of Mr Kelly's troublesome critics'. Bell's judgement was informed by the fact that many sources assert that Kelly committed the act. At time of writing, the Wikipedia entry for the Long Kesh/Maze prison break still states: 'One officer who attempted to prevent the escape was shot in the head by Gerry Kelly'. So,

why take a case against O'Doherty (and another pending case against journalist Ruth Dudley Edwards, a trenchant critic of Sinn Féin, for asserting the same) when it is so widely stated by others elsewhere? Bell concluded that the defence of a democratic principle was at stake in the case: 'The field of political speech... must be carefully handled lest the fabric of democracy be damaged. Defamation actions in this field need to be carefully considered in case they are being used to attack



legitimate free speech'.

The sting for Kelly and his supporters is far beyond the financial loss. Since the ceasefires, and particularly since the Good Friday Agreement, Sinn Féin has engaged in a systematic campaign to validate the IRA violence of the past while espousing politics now and in the future. The finding that Kelly's reputation was not damaged by O'Doherty proceeded from the reasoning that his reputation had been damaged already by his own actions, a perspective to which Sinn Féin cannot accede. Bell reasoned that a right-thinking person would consider 'that anyone who is guilty to the criminal standard of proof of exploding car bombs in a capital city, putting the lives of dozens or hundreds of people at risk, has lost his moral compass'. Consequently, the court did not find that Kelly, who is, in his own description, 'unrepentant' about the violent attacks he engaged in, was damaged by O'Doherty's statement.

Speaking in 2022, the then Taoiseach Micheál Martin said: 'There is something deeply wrong with a party which has built its entire existence on honouring a campaign of violence but now attacks and sues anyone who claims that they supported particular actions within that campaign'. As the volume of SLAPP cases attests, neither Martin's criticism nor an open letter to Mary Lou McDonald published by freedom of speech journal, ARTICLE 19, in November 2023 has prompted a sea change. The open letter was co-signed by, among others, the European Federation of Journalists, the Index on Censorship, Irish PEN, Justice for Journalists Foundation, PEN International and Reporters Without Borders. Akin to the Bell judgement, the letter challenged Sinn Féin leader, alleging that Sinn Féin's members' cases against journalists 'have the hallmarks of SLAPPs' and urged that Sinn Féin members instead to pursue their grievances through the offices of the press council and press ombudsman rather than personally suing journalists.

The timing of this unwanted spotlight on Sinn Féin's methods is critical as Sinn Féin readies itself for the First Minister role in the Northern Ireland Assembly. In the South, it remains the biggest party and best placed to lead the next government within a year and a half. The publicity following Kelly's defeat has generated a conversation throughout the country about the fact that the most frequent initiators of defamation actions against journalists and writers (by a country mile) come from the richest party on the island of Ireland (by a country mile).

During interviews, Sinn Féin members are not averse to warning journalists to 'be careful' when they raise certain subjects. As its leadership strategises the way to power, they might consider how careful they themselves are being in the eyes of the law – and in the eyes of the Irish public whose trust Sinn Féin needs.

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Game On!

By Chris Wheaton



As I sit in front of my warm fireplace, looking out the window, having survived the “bomb cyclone” (whatever that is?) I wonder why do we put up with these Chicago winters? The forecast for the next few days paints a grim scenario where we may go forty-eight straight hours without hitting 0 degrees. That is cold! The redeeming feature in all this is the fact that my family and I really have nothing to do that would require us to leave the warmth of our home. Opening weekend for Naperville Hurling’s indoor campaign was put on hold for a week, playoff football is plentiful on the tube and our bar is well stocked.

I ventured out last weekend with a group of good friends to check out the Guinness Open Gate Brewery on Kinzie in the big city. It was quite an adventure as the six of us got on the 9:25 express train out of Naperville, landing us at Union Station a little bit after 10:00. A short and cheap Uber ride to the brewery put us there before 11:00 and we had the whole place to ourselves.

As one of only two official Guinness locations in the USA (Baltimore being the other) we were excited to partake in all they had to offer. Upon entering we passed through the Guinness Bakery which tempted us with cookies, muffins, banana bread and a variety of teas and coffees. We picked up a few items which were all delicious and headed into the bar for the “main event”: my first Guinness of the day.

I am no aficionado, but I have had a few pints over the years and have always marveled at the quality pour that they do over at Quigley’s Irish Pub in downtown Naperville. As you would expect, the pour at Guinness was up to any challenge and was presented like a liquid work of art. The first sip solidified that this was not just some neighborhood Irish Pub we see on many street corners but the “real deal.” The stout was as smooth and creamy as any I have had in Ireland. I immediately knew that taking an Uber was the smart call for the day, even at

just 4.2 ABV.

To complement our liquid libations, we quickly ordered from the extensive menu. Being early and a Saturday, the brunch menu was our only option, but it did not disappoint. I insisted that we get at least one order of brown bread, and the portion was big enough to give all six of us an ample taste. I love brown bread and this option was excellent. It was a tad different than many I have had having some interesting spices added to the mix. Lathered with butter I could have been done then, but I soldiered on for the good of you readers.

A few in our group chose the crab benedict which they raved about and a few more had the Guinness stew which also received thumbs up from my friends. I went all in and chose the full Irish breakfast. It was enough food for three of us and was quite tasty, but it was more of an “Americanized” version of the full Irish. The plate was lacking traditional white and black pudding and the bacon, although very good was what you would get at most quality American breakfast joints. I cannot say I was expecting spot on authenticity, so I was not really disappointed, and truth be known, we were there for the beer!

When we finally left (voluntarily, we were not asked to leave) at 2:30 the line to get in was long. We saw the crowds starting to gather soon after we arrived, so if you are planning on a visit and are not opposed to drinking before noon, get there early. In my opinion, and I am no restaurant critic, it was an excellent experience. The staff was very friendly (surprisingly, none of them were Irish) and well versed in the menu and certainly not afraid to make recommendations, without saying they loved everything they served. I appreciate it when a server is honest about what other patrons have said. At the end of the day, I highly recommend checking this place out especially if you have a longing for one of the best tasting Guinness’ in town.

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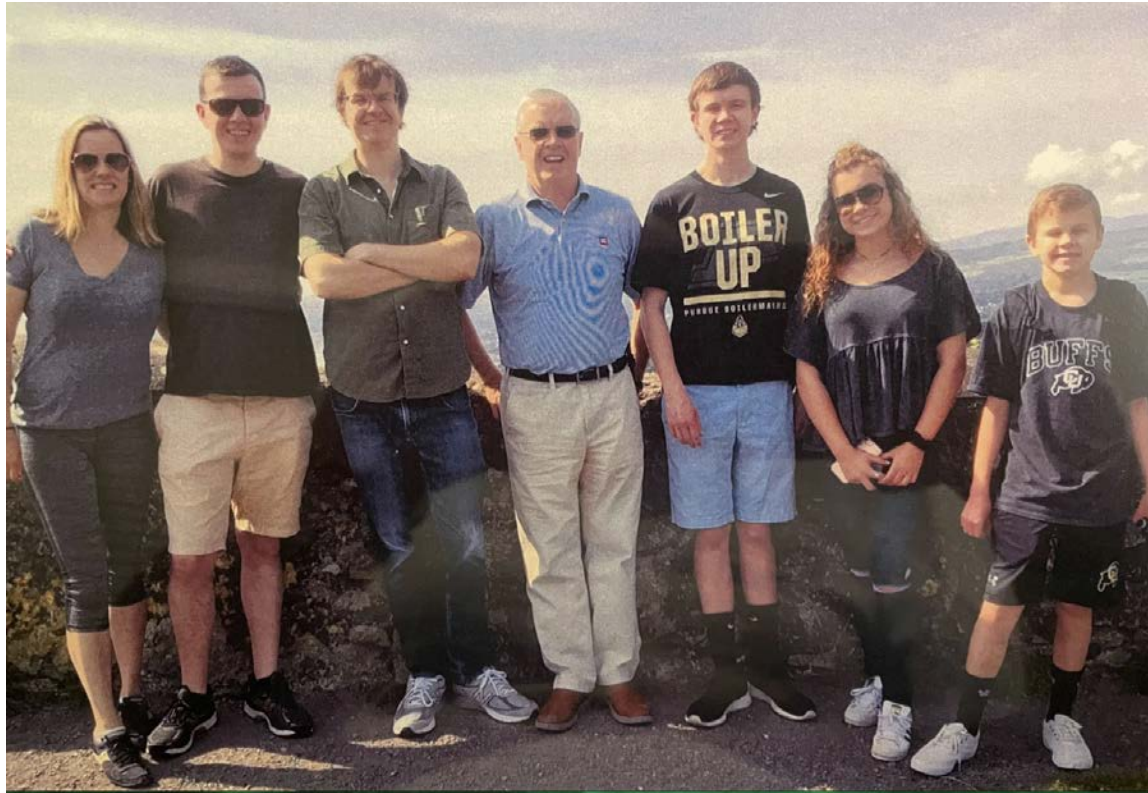
Ireland Network Chicago Honors Mike Clune of Clune Construction With 2024 IN Spirit Award

The IN Spirit Award demonstrates Ireland Network's profound gratitude for an individual's incredible service to the Irish community and is presented at the Annual Ball each February in front of members, partners and supporters. It is our great privilege to honor Mike Clune with the 2024 IN Spirit Award!

Michael T. Clune, hailing from Dublin, serves as the Chairman of the Irish American Partnership, an organization dedicated to connecting Irish America and friends of Ireland to their heritage through targeted giving to education, community development, and peace initiatives across the island of Ireland.

Ruairi Barnwell, President of the Ireland Network Chicago added, "We are so pleased to be presenting the 2024 IN Spirit Award to Mike Clune, a very worthy and deserving recipient. Mike is an inspiration to all immigrants, not just those of us from the Island. He has been a tremendous supporter of the Irish community and the Ireland Network Chicago since our inception in 2003. We look forward to a great evening on February 10th at our annual black-tie gala to present the award and celebrate with Mike and his family."

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Mike Clune began his career in the construction business at an early age in Europe and the Middle East. In 1978 he moved to Chicago, Illinois. Shortly after his arrival, he secured an entry-level job at the company that would ultimately be the foundation for building his own firm. Over the years, Mike's



personal work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit guided him in transforming that company into Clune Construction.

In 1996, this same work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit earned Mike his induction into the Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame. Sponsored by the University of Chicago, the award is given to innovative business leaders in the Chicago area who have spearheaded private companies, overcome challenges, and exhibited high levels of excellence while demonstrating consistent sales growth, employment generation,



innovation and profitability. Committed to philanthropy across the United States and Ireland, Mike contributes to a wide array of causes. Clune Construction is actively involved in every community in which it is located, and annually donates a percentage of its profits to local and national charities. Clune Construction recently completed a pledge to donate more than \$1 million to cancer research. Among the organizations Mike supports are the Irish American Partnership; C.R.A.S.H. USA, of which he is co-founder; Mercy Housing Lakefront; Rebuilding Together; Emeritus of Chicago House; Loyola Academy on the Facilities and Building Committee; and Joseph and Mary Retreat House. Mike and Clune Construction have also actively supported and sponsored many Irish athletes and sporting events, including Pdraig Harrington, Michael Conlon, Saint Patrick's Athletic F.C., Dublin Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), the Irish Everest Team, and Junior Olympics.


As Chairman of the

Board of the Irish American Partnership, Mike has been investing in Ireland's future for over two decades, giving to a wide array of programs including education for homeless youth, music education, and primary school STEM initiatives. His dedication to the Partnership's mission has empowered the organization to raise more than \$53 Million for programs across Ireland, North and South, benefiting the lives of young people and communities across

the island. Among Mike Clune's donations to Ireland is a gift given to Inishbofin National School, the only primary school on the island, the glue that binds the community together. Only 11 km off the coast of Connemara lies the island of Inishbofin, a stunning seafaring community with a single primary school, a church, two pubs, and a handful of seasonal hotels. Dotted with Iron Age forts, medieval monasteries, and sandy white beaches, Inishbofin has long been a popular destination for those seeking a bit of adventure. Yet, for the 180 year-long inhabitants, life can be lonely and difficult. For Mike and his children, Inishbofin represents nearly 100 years of philanthropic commitment to a community that has profoundly impacted their lives. The association began with Clune's grandfather, Michael J. Clune, who served as postmaster of Clifden, County Galway, from 1923-1935. Every time the postmaster visited Inishbofin, he grew more inspired by its hardworking people and more determined to give them as much as he could. He passed this legacy of commitment and love to his son, Michael A. Clune, who passed it on to his son, Michael T. Clune. In June 2016, Mike brought his children to the island to pledge \$25,000 to Inishbofin National School through the Partnership's O'Neill School Grants program. His grant has been used to purchase iPads, computers, a telescope, and a weather station for the school, connecting students to the outside world. While new technology may seem frivolous in this rugged, rocky environment, it is paramount for keeping students competitive in the modern economy. With the decline of fishing as a source of livelihood, islanders need new ways to survive. They hope that their children will harness their technological skills to stay and make a living in this tightknit community - blending the benefits of modernity with the character of smalltown life.


the island.

While new technology may seem frivolous in this rugged, rocky environment, it is paramount for keeping students competitive in the modern economy. With the decline of fishing as a source of livelihood, islanders need new ways to survive. They hope that their children will harness their technological skills to stay and make a living in this tightknit community - blending the benefits of modernity with the character of smalltown life.



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As I sit here writing this article we are expecting our first major snowfall, followed by some really cold weather. After all we live in the Midwest and eventually this is the weather we normally get during the winter. I loved it when I was a kid, but now that I am older I'm not a big fan. The thoughts of shoveling, salting, driving, and trying not to slip or fall are things I am not looking forward to. I guess the only consolation is that there is always somewhere that gets hit worse than us. It's funny how we complain about the heat in the summer, the cold and snow in the winter,

the rain in the spring, and the leaves in the fall. But still we choose to live here instead of places like San Diego, or Hawaii. Despite all the weather ups and downs I don't think that there is a better place to live. We have access to the best reasonably priced meat, produce, seafood, and dairy products than any other region in the U.S. I recently visited family in Toronto and I couldn't believe the prices in the supermarkets. How about \$14.00 for a watermelon? When you factor in the exchange rate that's still about \$10. Everything is at least double, and sometimes

triple what we pay. I know that inflation has driven up the cost of groceries, but compared to the rest of the world we still have it pretty good, and there are always sales. I just bought a 10 pound bag of chicken legs for .69 cents a pound! I have some marinating in red wine for Coq au Vin, and cooked some



backs. Three pounds should do. Place them in a large stock

time will be about 1 1/2 hours. Strain stocks and cool to room



temperature. Covering and refrigerating hot stock will cause it to sour. If your stocks need more flavor just reduce in a sauce pan to your desired taste. You can always fortify your stock with a good quality base. Look for one that has roasted chicken as the first ingredient not salt! Better than Bouillon or Minors are both excellent choices.

I recently made a mushroom barley soup that I based off of a Polish recipe. My kids

with a mirepoix for chicken tacos reserving the bones and vegetables for a homemade chicken stock.

Winter is the perfect time for hearty soups and stews that warm you from the inside out. They are usually made with items you already have in your fridge and pantry. Carrots, onions, celery are the basic ingredients for a mirepoix and are generally found in most soup and stew recipes. Whatever you do don't buy expensive ingredients that are out of season. If you don't make soup very often you may have to bring in some ingredients that you don't normally keep on hand, like dried peas, lentils, beans, barley and the likes. I recommend that make your own homemade stocks. Start with chicken or vegetable.

I like to use chicken legs but you can use drumsticks or

pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil and skim off the foam that forms on the top of the stock. Add 2 large carrots, 1 medium onion, 3 stalks of celery, the green stalks from leeks, all rough chopped. 2 cloves of garlic crushed, 1teaspoon whole black peppercorns, 3 bay leaves, and 1/2 cup parsley. Reduce heat and simmer 45 minutes. If using chicken legs or drumsticks remove from the pot and skin and debone reserving the meat for soup, chicken pies, or tacos. Add bones and skin back to the pot and continue to cook for an additional hour. You may need to add more water if stock reduces too much. For vegetable stock replace the chicken with root vegetables like parsnip, turnip, rutabaga, fennel bulb, leeks, and tomatoes that are too soft to slice. Cooking

thought it was the best soup I ever made so I thought I would share it with you.

As with any recipe make sure you read it completely to make sure it is not beyond your cooking skills and have all the ingredients on hand when you start.

- Mushroom Barley Soup**
Serves 12
- Ingredients**
- 6 oz dried mushrooms
 - 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
 - 1 cup chopped onions
 - 1 cup chopped carrots
 - 1 cup chopped celery
 - 1 cup chopped leeks white part only
 - 2 cups sliced cremini mushrooms
 - 1 cup diced potatoes
 - 2/3 cup pearl barley
 - 8 cups good chicken or vegetable stock
 - 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 - 2 bay leaves
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 1 teaspoon black pepper
 - 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 - 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
 - 1 cup heavy cream
 - 1/2 cup sour cream

Place mushrooms in a heat proof bowl and cover with boiling water. Soak mushrooms for 20 minutes. Drain mushrooms and chop, reserving the mushroom liquid. Sauté onion, carrot, and celery in butter for 5 minutes until soft. Add barley, stock and dried mushrooms with liquid, and bay leaves. Reduce heat and cook covered on a low simmer for 1 hour. Add mushrooms and potatoes and cook an additional 20 minutes. If the soup has too much liquid mix 2 tablespoons of corn starch and water to form mixture similar to cream. Add to soup and stir to thicken. Add sour cream, heavy cream, and parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Combine and serve. Garnish with sour cream and sliced mushroom.

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Irish Valentine's Day Traditions

by Ciaran Vipond

Valentine's Day is marked here in Ireland in much the same way as it is by our friends around the globe. Romantic couples give each other cards, gifts,

a gift between lovers in Ireland for centuries. And while the first Claddagh ring was given by a man by his wife to be, the Claddagh is now one of our most popular designs for friendship, promise, wedding or engagement rings for both men and women

year round, but especially on Valentine's Day. The famous Dolmen in Co. Clare, known as the bed of the lovers, is named for Dhiarmada and Gráinne, a tragic couple from Celtic Mythology and a not-to-be-missed site on the Wild Atlantic Way.

Howth in Dublin sees literary couples pay pilgrimage to a spot made famous by James Joyce's masterpiece Ulysses. The soliloquy from Molly Bloom recounts Leopold's marriage proposal at Howth and her passionate response: "...and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes." Just a short train ride from Dublin city centre, you can be sure there have been many passionate proposals staged in Howth since.

For couples who share a love of the outdoors as well as each other, Lough Ouler is a popular spot to visit. Romantics are rewarded for their 2 to 3 hr hike up Tonelagee Mountain with a view of this stunning, heart shaped lough in Co. Wicklow. This beautiful view would soften the hardest heart and is an ideal spot for a Valentine's Day hike!



flowers, or chocolates, and they may share a meal or an activity together. Although there are no uniquely Irish Valentine's Day practices, we do have several lovely traditions you may want to try to give the day a charming Irish touch.

Say I love you - Irish Style

Ireland is known as the land of saints and scholars, so it's unsurprising that Irish people have a way with "fine words." With at least seven different ways to tell a loved one how you feel, we think Irish or Gaelic is really the best language for romance.

Whether you are telling someone they are your soul mate, your "Anam Cara", or the bright love of your heart "Grá Geal Mo Chroí," Irish has you covered!

Whether in Irish or English, writing a funny or sweet note to your love is a tradition that goes back many years in Ireland, as this entry from the national folklore collection attests. And the story goes that the global tradition of love notes can be traced all the way back to St. Valentine himself.

Seek the Blessing of St. Valentine

Speaking of the patron saint of love, many people travel from all over Ireland and the world to visit a shrine to St. Valentine in the imposing Whitefriar St. church in the centre of Dublin.

Here they find a golden box that houses the heart of the saint. Many pray to St. Valentine for love and happiness, while romantic couples seek blessings for their union, and often for their engagement or wedding rings.

Exchange an Irish tradition of love, loyalty, and friendship

And if a trip to the shrine of St. Valentine in Dublin to bless your rings is not on the cards this February 14th, perhaps uniquely Irish ring is a suitable alternative? The Claddagh is a 400 year old design unique to Ireland with romantic sentiment perfect for Valentine's Day.

With heart, crown and hands, promising love, loyalty and friendship, this design has been



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Visit a romantic spot

Whitefriar street church has not cornered the market for romantic spots to visit in Ireland. The Ireland is scattered with windswept and beautiful places that are popular places for loved-up couples to visit

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Chicago Irish Film Festival Celebrates 25 Years

This year celebrates 25 years of Irish filmmaking excellence with an amazing selection of drama, documentaries and short films. The festival takes place in-person, February 29th - March 3rd with screenings at Theater on the Lake, AMC-New City and the Gallery Theater and online with selected programming March 4-10, 2024, with both segments of the festival celebrating

on the award-winning Irish author John McGahern's final novel of the same name, the story captures a year in the life of a rural, lakeside community in 1970's Ireland filled with memorable characters, quiet walks and the warmth of sunlight as the seasons pass.

The festival has always been passionate about the importance of celebrating independent

you, if you fall asleep! And Jack Armstrong's MADE IN DUBLIN is the heartbreaking story of an aspiring actor, Stuart Cullen, who picks the wrong drug addled, alcoholic washed up Hollywood director to audition for, played to the hilt by Paudge Behan.

In between the opening and closing is a collection of documentaries that touch on everything from horror and



The Golden West

independent filmmaking at its best and championing both new and established Irish filmmakers.

Opening the festival on February 29th at Theater in the Lake director Patricia Kelly will present her debut film, VERDIGRIS, starring Geraldine McAlinden and Maya O'Shea (picked as one of the five top Irish actresses of 2023 by the Irish Times) as two women from very different backgrounds who form an unlikely bond as they walk the streets of Dublin towards new and empowering futures for both. The film is a heartwarming story that finds humor in unexpected situations and beauty in the unexpected relationship. The opening night includes a pre-screening reception.

Closing the festival on Sunday, March 3, at the AMC-NewCity Theatre, is Pat Collin's cinematically stirring film THAT THEY MAY FACE THE RISING SUN starring Barry Ward, Anne Bederke and Lalor Roddy. Based

Irish film and this year we are thrilled to be bringing a stellar line-up of Midwest premiers to Chicago. Mixing thriller with gothic director Lisa Mulcahy's THE LIES WE TELL stars Agnes O'Casey as Maud who inherits the family fortune, but in classic Victorian suppression, being a minor and a woman, is deemed unfit to take care of herself and the money. Enter Uncle Silas and his dimwit offspring and life at Knowl becomes a last man, or woman, standing duel of wits and petticoats.

Also is the thriller camp is John Carlin's THE LIE OF THE LAND, where a heart racing cat and mouse game between an aging farm couple, Ali White and Nigel O'Neill, and a thwarted con man that was out to steal everything from them turns deadly. Ian Hunt-Duffy's DOUBLE BLIND, starring Millie Brady and Pollyana McIntosh, will make everyone think twice about volunteering for a drug trial that has side effects that could kill

tragedy to amazing and inspiring. From the award-winning directors Garry Keane and Stephen Gerard Kelly (GAZA), and Ireland's submission to the 2024 Academy Awards, IN THE SHADOW OF



That They May Face The Rising Sun

BEIRUT is a new cinematic odyssey that penetrates deep below the surface of Beirut, a still beautiful, yet deeply troubled city on the brink of financial collapse. The documentary weaves four

compelling storylines together in a searing portrait of a people and a city struggling to survive.

For over two decades Ireland as tried to come to terms with the horror of the "mother and baby institutions" that finally closed their doors in the late 1990's. In the new documentary STOLEN filmmaker Margo Harkin takes an in depth look at how over 80,000 unmarried mothers were incarcerated in institutions run by the



One Night In Millstreet

Catholic Church from 1922 to 1998 and the emotional and social carnage the institutions left behind. Screen Magazine called the film "essential viewing for Irish society" and Donald Clarke of the Irish Times described it a "...whispered epic of still-raw secrets."

The mid-1990's also saw another Irish spectacle, the fight between Steve "The Celtic Warrior" Collins and Chris "Simply the Best" Eubank. ONE NIGHT IN MILLSTREET, Andrew Gallimore's gripping documentary, captures the lead up to the fight as well as the boxers' unique personalities and some of the darker elements of boxing as a sport.

It would not be the Chicago Irish Film Festival without shorts and this year we welcome one of the festival's earliest contributors Barry Dignam (DREAM KITCHEN 1999) now the Head of European Projects at the National Film School, as he presents the 25th Anniversary

and humorous paradoxes of contemporary farming in Ireland as 90-year-old Seamus Malloy goes about his daily tasks dodging cats, dogs and ping-pong balls. THE TALE OF BILLY O'C, directed by Pete Harris, is a psychological crime thriller set in a small village in County Kilkenny, Ireland in 1975, with an IRA safehouse and small-town politics at the center of the plot; twist and turns around while a bomb ticks down. Worn Out, Played Out, Strung Out. 10 Years after Punk band Crust split up the band members lives have fallen apart, but Baz Black's DUBLIN CRUST is out to put the band back together for one last epic gig. Directed, written and playing the drums, Baz Black has created a love song to punk that everyone will find endearing. And absolutely fascinating is Daniel J. O'Donnell's homage to the remarkable men and women who set out at the turn of the century in 1900 to create a National Theatre in Ireland. THE THEATRE ON LOWER ABBEY STREET, is the story of the early years of Ireland's Abbey Theatre and how it earned its place in world theatre.

We invite you to check out the all the amazing films in the 2024 Chicago Irish Film Festival at: www.chicagoirishfilmfestival.com to you curate your personal festival experience. Passes and individual tickets are on sale through the website and in honor of our 25th year we invite everyone to enjoy a 25% discount on ALL passes and tickets through February 15, 2024. Passes and Ticket prices range from \$ 5 - \$220 (less discount!). Passes and tickets available through GoEvent.

2024 Presenting Sponsors include: the Government of Ireland's Emigrant Support Program and Gage Hospitality. 2024 Cultural Sponsors include: Culture Ireland, the Irish Film Institute, Consulate General of Ireland-Chicago and Screen Ireland.

2024 Festival Venues: Theater on the Lake, 2401 N. lake Shore Drive : AMC-New City, 1500 N. Clybourn : Society for Arts : Gallery Theatre, 1112 N. Milwaukee Avenue.

Questions or inquires, please contact the festival: info@chicagoirishfilmfestival.com

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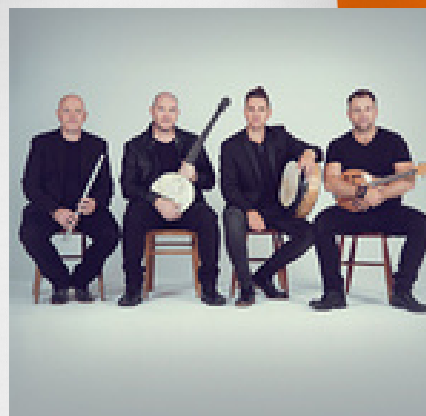
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O'Kelly's Puts an Irish Stamp on Their Beverly Neighborhood

By Cliff Carlson

Brian O'Neill bought a building in the Beverly area back in 2011 on the advice of his mother. He used to cut the lawn there when he was younger and even painted the upstairs apartment.

During the last decade, it has seen several business changes. Joe's Barbershop was there for over 50 years. Bridgeport Coffee was there for three years, and then moved into wholesale (and O'Kellys smartly serves Bridgeport Coffee)

About five years ago Brian and Imelda Daly Kelly had the idea to open a gourmet bakery, and restaurant which

would highlight a full Irish breakfast, soda bread, scones, and packaged Irish food items that were popular in the Irish Community.

The timing wasn't right with Covid raising its ugly head, and they put the idea on the shelf.

Two years ago Imelda came to Brian and asked if the offer for her to partner with him was still on the table. Imelda Daly Kelly is related to Brian through family, as her son is married to Brian's wife's sister. She also happens to have grown up in Co. Offaly, Ireland. Brian said yes, and that's when things got rolling!

They combined their two

surnames and on November 11th (Veteran's Day) opened O'Kelly's, a gourmet bakery with cake pops, pies, scones, and other assorted goodies on one side, and a spacious dining area on the other side.

The Saturday I was in to interview them, they had a powerful Irish breakfast going and a good group of customers.

"Beverly is all about family," said Brian. Beverly is a family-first neighborhood and is very Irish."

The menu is full Irish. There is nowhere close that serves a full Irish breakfast, so Brian and Imelda made sure they featured it.

Their traditional Irish breakfast features four kinds of meat, white pudding, black pudding, rashers and sausages, eggs, pork and beans, mushrooms and tomatoes, and feature Turano bread instead of brown bread. They also feature a unique Irish Breakfast Sandwich is the bangers, rashers, and cheese on Turano



most of the cooking and when asked why she wants to do this she said, "It's been about all that I wanted to do for a long time, and Brian thought I was pretty good at it so we went for it!

Good-sized pies include French Silk, Key Lime, Chocolate, Lemon Cheesecake, and Apple. You can buy it by the slice or by the whole pie. Most of the pies run about \$20 each and are well worth the price of admission.

They also have bacon/cheddar, blueberry and lemon scones, and a large variety of donuts. Scones are their biggest sellers.

Imelda is fully committed to the business. She moved from the Western suburbs and lives above the shop as hours in a retail food business are long enough and the commute might have made the work a lot harder.

The owners of Southside Irish and A Touch of Ireland have

bread has been a big hit with customers.

They not only serve you a great Irish breakfast at a great price of \$11.95, but they feature Winston's products, and they stock it so you can take it home and make it yourself.

I talked to Imelda who does

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come through and supported their business.

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Come on out and give them a try. They have 20 parking spots not counting street parking.

Not afraid to try new things, Brian and Imelda say when it warms up they plan to put an outdoor patio with food service in the back and do weekends with live music.

The live music will be during open hours but they might rent the space to those that have shown interest and give that a try in the evenings.

They are also planning an outdoor area in the front.

"We make custom gifts for people for the holidays, and are willing to continue doing that if it's not too time-consuming," said Brian. "We want to assure we have enough of the right staff to do the job well," he continued.

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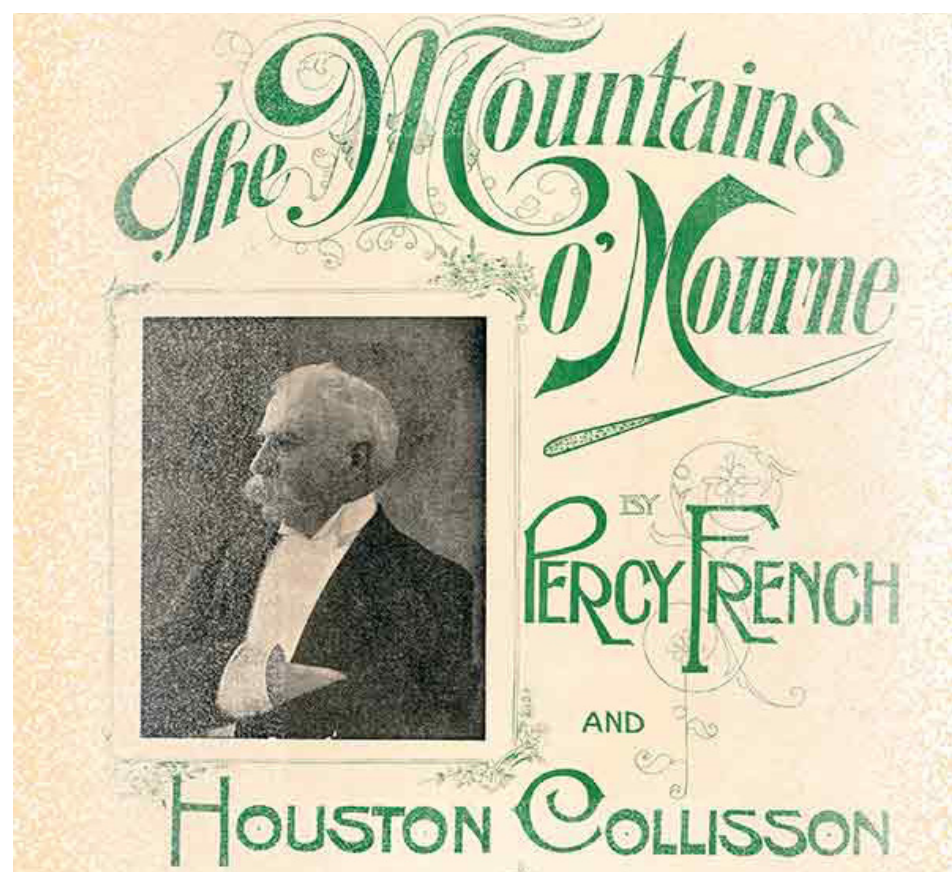
The Life and Music of Percy French

Singer Kathy Cowan, joined by pianist Michael Brauer, presents a lecture recital on the life, music, poetry, and art of one of Ireland's most beloved composers of Parlor and Music Hall song of the 19th late 19th and early 20th centuries, Percy French. Special thanks to writer and scholar, Theresa Choske, for sharing her research.

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Wales, who saw Gemma Grainger stand down as manager earlier this month, will use the game as a warm-up for Euro 2025 qualifying.

Grainger, who succeeded Jayne Ludlow in March 2021, will take up a new head coach role with Norway.

Wales will be led by interim head coach Jon Grey, Grainger's former assistant manager.

Football Association of Wales [FAW] chief executive Noel Mooney says he is hopeful of announcing Grainger's successor before Euro qualifying begins in April.

Republic of Ireland are ranked 24th in the world, while Wales are 32nd.

"The Republic of Ireland are eight places above us in the world rankings which will benefit us because we always want to play and test ourselves against higher-ranked nations," Grey said said.

"We've taken plenty of learnings away from our first Nations League campaign and

we'll look to build on these heading into this friendly fixture and beyond.

"The 2025 Women's Euro qualifying draw takes place in early March and

hopefully this camp will help get the players in the best place possible for the start of the upcoming qualifying campaign."

Wales to Play Republic of Ireland in February Friendly in Dublin

from BBC.com (pictured above)

Wales' Jess Fishlock under pressure from Republic of Ireland's Katie McCabe during the Women's B International Friendly Challenge match between Wales and Republic of Ireland at Rodney Parade on August 19, 2016

The Republic of Ireland will host Wales at Shamrock Rovers' Tallaght Stadium on 27 February, kick-off 19:30 GMT.



Wales will travel to Dublin to face the Republic of Ireland in an international friendly match on Tuesday, 27 February.

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IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER

PRESENTS
The 17th Annual

Wearing OF THE

GREEN

DINNER DANCE

Sunday
MARCH 3, 2024
5-9 PM

TICKETS \$60

Kick off St. Patrick's Day season with corned beef and cabbage (or vegetarian) dinner by Biagio/Harrington's Catering, entertainment by Gerry Haughey Ensemble, Trinity Academy of Irish Dance and the Shannon Rovers Pipe Band. Dancing, prizes, sweet table and a cash bar in the Erin Room.

**RESERVATIONS NECESSARY BY FEBRUARY 28 | TABLES OF 10 & 12 AVAILABLE
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Irish American Heritage Center | 4626 N. Knox Ave. Chicago, IL 60630 |   



Protection from Deportation: DALE & The Rich Irish Legacy in Labor Movements

The tapestry of worker rights and their perennial fight for just conditions is deeply intertwined with history. Ireland, with its rich legacy, has been at the vanguard of shaping labor movements, leaving a profound mark on global

narratives of worker solidarity. of Homeland Security, under the auspices of the Biden-Harris Administration, streamlined the application process, further solidifying the U.S. government's commitment to uplifting worker rights.

DALE: A Response to Exploitation

Channeling the spirit of historic Irish resistance, DALE seeks to protect the vulnerable. A significant portion of the



narratives of worker solidarity.

The Irish diaspora, particularly in America, have been critical advocates for worker rights, owing to the steadfast spirit they inherited from their homeland. Historically, the Irish community has faced adversity head-on, battling socio-economic hardships, famines, and political tumults. It's this very legacy of resilience that makes the introduction of the Deferred Action for Labor Enforcement (DALE) program resonate so deeply.

One cannot talk about the Irish impact on labor movements without mentioning the origins of the word "boycott." Captain Charles Boycott, an English land agent in 19th-century Ireland, became notorious for his oppressive treatment of tenant farmers and the subsequent evictions. As a strategy of non-violent resistance, local Irish workers and the broader community, driven by a collective pursuit of justice, ostracized him. They refrained from working in his fields, providing services to his household, or engaging in trade. Their united front gave birth to the term "boycotting", which has since become a powerful tool of peaceful protest worldwide.

Today, the DALE program stands as a beacon of hope for countless undocumented immigrants and non-citizen workers in America. It's a poignant reminder of the global struggle for worker rights and how movements, influenced by historic actions like the Irish boycott, can lead to impactful legislations.

The Essence of DALE

DALE promises protection from the looming threat of deportation, empowering beneficiaries to secure a work permit and a valid social security number. Although it stops short of granting a formal immigration status, it provides a provisional shield against deportation, affirming recipients as lawfully present in the U.S. for specified intents.

Recent changes herald a new era for DALE. In January 2023, the Department

U.S. workforce consists of undocumented workers who, due to their precarious standing, frequently become victims of employer exploitation. This injustice manifests in myriad forms: wage theft, hazardous working conditions, and stifling the right to unionize. With the specter of deportation constantly hanging over their heads, these workers often remain silent against such transgressions.

DALE's primary objective is to change this narrative. By offering a protective umbrella, it aims to embolden workers to voice their grievances, ensuring labor agencies can effectively investigate and redress labor law breaches. Such policies not only benefit the undocumented but also enhance workplace conditions universally.

Qualifying for DALE

Eligibility for DALE necessitates involvement in an active labor dispute or being under scrutiny by a labor agency. Crucially, this claim should be validated by a Statement of Interest from the investigating agency.

Application Dynamics

Once armed with the Statement of Interest, potential beneficiaries can navigate the path to deferred action with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). This is a meticulous process involving the submission of numerous forms and corroborative evidence.

Importantly, DALE's protection isn't everlasting. Typically spanning 2 years, it can be renewed under specific circumstances, such as persistent labor complaints or disputes. However, every silver lining has a cloud. The process carries inherent risks, making it imperative for potential applicants to solicit guidance from seasoned immigration attorneys.

For those keen to explore or discuss the potential of a DALE application, our office remains open for consultations. Reach out to us at 773-828-9544 or drop an email at info@mcenteelaw.com.

Penning by Katherine Del Rosario & Fiona McEntee.

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GO TO IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG FOR TICKETS AND INFORMATION.
IAHC members always save money on tickets! Call 773-282-7035, extension 10 for the member discount code.
Prices do not include Eventbrite fees.



PHIL COULTER

FEBRUARY 10 | 7:00PM

Join us in the Mayfair Theatre at the Irish American Heritage Center for the return of Irish superstar Phil Coulter, in concert with his wife, singer Geraldine Branagan for an evening of song and memories.
Ticket holders will be eligible to win a Caribbean Cruise for two with Phil and the High Kings! The winner will be drawn the night of the concert.

Tickets: \$30 Balcony | \$45 Tier 3 | \$55 Tier 2 | \$65 Tier 1



RUNA

FEBRUARY 18 | 7:00PM

RUNA breathes fresh life into traditional Celtic music by digging into the songs and tunes to find the universal thread that binds past to present!

Tickets: \$20 IAHC Members | \$25 non-members



AOIFE SCOTT

MARCH 2 | 7:00PM

Join us for an evening of the best Irish traditional and folk music as Aoife Scott plays at the Irish American Heritage Center. Award winning folk singer Aoife Scott is a songwriter based in Dublin, Ireland. Born into the legendary Black Family (Aoife's mother is Frances).

Tickets: \$20 IAHC Members | \$25 non-members



ST. PATRICK'S DAY 2024 WITH THE SCREAMING ORPHANS!

MARCH 17 | 7:00PM

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with this unbelievable show! Chicago favorites The Screaming Orphans will be in the Mayfair Theatre at the Irish American Heritage Center on Sunday, March 17th! Don't miss the opportunity to see these superstars! The pub will be open and the craic will be on!

Tickets: \$35



BOW TIDES

MAY 17 | 7:00PM

The Bow Tides are back in the Mayfair Theatre on May 17, 2024. Don't miss the fiddle frenzy! Their second appearance at the IAHC, this will be a can't miss performance!

Tickets: \$20 IAHC Members | \$25 non-members



LOS SAN PATRICIOS: THE IRISH SOLDIERS OF MEXICO

MAY 18 | 7:00PM

Los San Patricios: The Irish Soldiers of Mexico is back for another triumphant performance in the Mayfair Theatre at the Irish American Heritage Center! Don't miss this opportunity to celebrate two of Chicago's most vibrant cultures in music and dance! Join Sonos de Mexico and the Irish Music School of Chicago as they share the stage to present a tribute to the the St. Patrick's Battalion (Batallón de San Patricio).

Tickets are \$30 for IAHC members | General Admission \$35.



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Members and Friends of the Irish American Heritage Center,

In the coming weeks we will approach our busiest time of the year. St. Patrick's Day parades, parties, and gatherings remind us of a most important Irish tradition – good craic. We are asking members and supporters to join or renew their membership to the Irish American Heritage Center to support the best in Irish arts and culture.

Some highlights of this past year include:

- The traditional Irish Music Sessions in the Fifth Province Pub
- Events featuring The Shannon Rovers, Trinity Dancers, O'Hara School of Dance, and The Fitzpatrick School of Irish Dance
- The North American premiere of "The Humours of Bandon" one-person theatrical production
- Some of your favorite Irish bands like the Red Hot Chilli Pipers, Sharon Shannon, and Scythian
- The Christmas Bazaar and the Christmas Tea

Our member levels and benefits include:

- Member pre-sales for our Mayfair Theatre concerts
- Member discounts for all concerts and theater events
- Members-only film screenings
- Discounts in our gift shop and the Fifth Province Pub
- And more

Please see our membership page for more information: irish-american.org/support-us/membership/

And if you are one of the first 100 new or renewed members before St. Patrick's Day (March 17, 2024), you can gift a one year individual or one year family membership to a friend or family member for no extra charge!

This is Your Center. Your Center for Music. Your Center for Dance. Your Center for Culture, Your Center to Gather with Family and Friends. We hope you want to join our IAHC family by becoming a member today!

Warm regards,

Tom Chambers
President, Irish American Heritage Center

FRIDAY FISH FRY

2024 Lenten Fish Fries begin February 16th! All-you-can-eat fried cod and sides, music and Irish dancers. Bring the whole family!

February 16 & 23
March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29



CALL FOR ARTISTS

NEAR AND FAR ART EXHIBIT



THE 2024 BIENNIAL JURIED EXHIBIT, NEAR AND FAR IS APPROACHING FAST. NOW IS THE TIME TO REGISTER YOUR SUBMISSION.

All art mediums – painting, photographs, watercolors, fabric, calligraphy, mixed media, pastel, oil pastel, color pencil, pen and ink, and collage are welcome. Judging will be based on artwork sent via email attachment with the artist information sheet, maximum of two submissions.

OPENING RECEPTION
FEBRUARY 16TH | 7:00PM-9:00PM

THE SHOW WILL BE OPEN FOR VIEWING
FRIDAY EVENINGS FEBRUARY 16TH, 23RD, AND
MARCH 1ST, 8TH, 15TH FROM 7:00PM-9:00PM



IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER IS YOUR CENTER

Your Center for Music. Your Center for Dance. Your Center for Culture.
Your Center to gather with Family and Friends.

**STAY A PART OF IT BY JOINING OR RENEWING YOUR
MEMBERSHIP TODAY!**

“We came to spend more time at the Center through the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance, but over the years it has become so much more. Our whole family has dedicated volunteer hours.

Now it's part of our tradition!”

—The Owens Family, IAHC Members



ENHANCED MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS INCLUDE:

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY

♣ 1 Year \$30 Individual/\$50 Family

♣ 2 Years \$50 Individual/\$75 Family

- 10% off in the IAHC Gift Shop on non-sale and non-food items, and food in the Fifth Province
- Member only discounted tickets for concerts and shows
- The right to vote for IAHC Board of Directors
- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
- *Irish American News* subscription

HARPER ♣ 3 Years \$250

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- Member only discounted tickets for concerts and shows
- The right to vote for IAHC Board of Directors
- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
- *Irish American News* subscription
- 1 Exclusive IAHC Member T-Shirt

BARD ♣ 5 Years \$500

- 10% off in the IAHC Gift Shop on non-sale and non-food items, and food in the Fifth Province
- Member only discounted tickets for concerts and shows
- The right to vote for IAHC Board of Directors
- Members in good standing for three out of five consecutive years can run for IAHC Board of Directors
- Private Tour of the IAHC
- 2 Tickets to the IAHC Christmas Bazaar Breakfast
- *Irish American News* subscription
- 1 Exclusive IAHC Member T-Shirt

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MEMBERSHIP TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY
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773-282-8445 hprieto@irishchicago.org



Gatherings for Seniors

Discover a vibrant community and embrace the Irish spirit this winter!

Join our **FREE** Senior Gatherings at *Chicago Gaelic Park* and the *Irish American Heritage Center* for an engaging blend of Irish cultural events, social activities and educational workshops.

For questions or to have a detailed schedule of senior gatherings mailed to your home, call **Kathleen** on 773-282-8445.

The Shamrock Seniors

Senior gatherings at the *Irish American Heritage Center*

Wednesday 7th February
10 a.m. — 12 p.m.

Monthly Musical Gathering
Live music with Terry Byrne

Wednesday 21st February
10 a.m. — 12 p.m.

Fraud Prevention Class
With the Cook County Sheriff's Office

The Golden Gaels

Senior gatherings at *Chicago Gaelic Park*

Wednesday 14th February
10 a.m. — 12 p.m.

Fraud Prevention Class
With the Cook County Sheriff's Office

Wednesday 28th February
10 a.m. — 12 p.m.

Live Irish Music
With Ray Gavin

St. Patrick's Day Celebration!

Mass, Live Music and Refreshments

Irish American Heritage Centre
Wednesday 13th March

Mass at 11.30am followed by refreshments and live music from Joe McShane.

Bus from Garlic Park!



For questions or to book your seat, call **Kathleen** on 773-282-8445.

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Hosted by ICS Board Member, **Scott Brennan**

WINTER WELLNESS

Let's get through Chicago winter together!

All adult community members are invited to the Irish American Heritage Center for these FREE activities that support your wellbeing. Free childcare is offered for each event.

Stay for light snacks and socializing after!

Gentle Yoga

Saturday, February 17
10-11am

Expressive Art

Saturday, March 2
10-11:30am

Registration Required



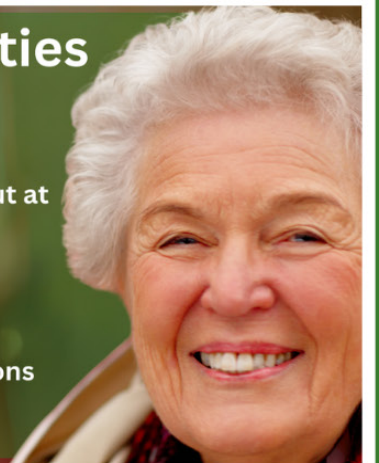
Volunteer Opportunities for Seniors

Support your community by helping out at *Irish Community Services*.

Opportunities include:

- Community Garden
- Intergenerational Holiday Celebrations

Call 773-282-8445 and speak with **Kathleen**.



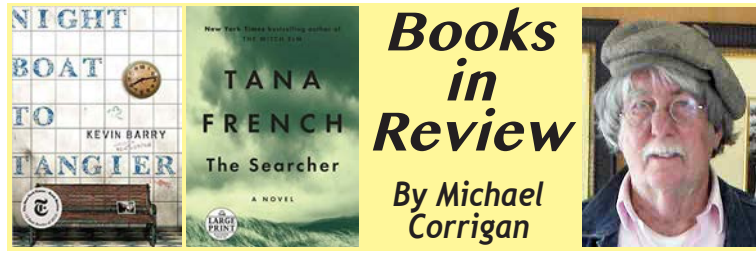
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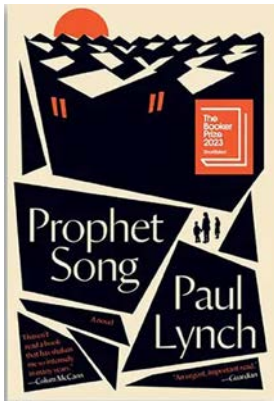
Irish Ann
www.Irishann.com



Prophet Song by

Prophet Song by Paul Lynch is a dystopian novel in the extreme that recently won the prestigious Booker Prize. It describes authoritarianism in Ireland, a country that has known sectarian violence. It starts with a simple knock on the door and Eilish Stack, the wife, opens to see two Irish policeman (gardaí), who ask about her husband, Paul. He isn't home. They are vague about what they wish to discuss with her husband, and this vagueness is a key to the novel's method and focus on unnamed terrors. We don't know who these people are who took over Ireland, and we know nothing about the rebels who want to dislodge them. The plot is simple and detailed. Eilish is a biologist who works for a biotech company; Larry is the deputy general secretary of the teachers' union. They have four children and live banal but safe existences. Eilish has an aging father facing dementia. Lynch suggests a sinister tone from the start. A "National Alliance Party" has recently taken control of the government and passed an Emergency Powers Act. Larry, as a trade unionist, attends a

big demonstration and Eilish reluctantly agrees. Are they not living in a free democracy? What follows is a descent into tragedy: Paul disappears, her oldest son joins the rebels, and Eilish is left to care for three children, two boys and a girl, while individual liberties daily disappear and chaos becomes normal.



Prophet Song is a brilliant but difficult novel to read. It has no paragraphs, only blocks of prose with comma splices and dialogue without quote marks within the prose. Lynch is creating in the reader the same claustrophobia the characters feel, but I wonder if that is necessary. Why make one's novel difficult to navigate? Other great novels are hard to read: Joyce's Ulysses, Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury, and a novel similar to Lynch's, Cormac McCarthy's The Road. With those books, there is a payoff, and the reader finds space to breathe. There is also humor. Even in 1984 by George Orwell, the main character, Winston, has a love affair before his final subjugation. Eilish's sister in Canada begs her to escape, but Eilish doesn't heed her advice until all options are futile. Lynch's bleak novel is relentless from the

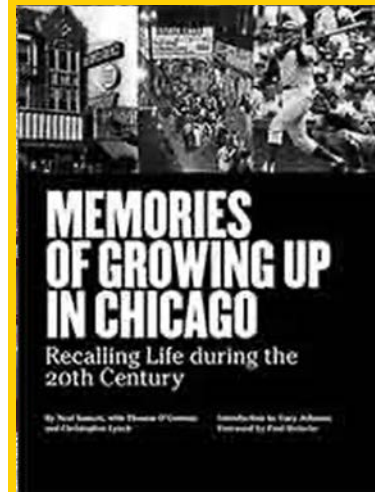
beginning to the end. The following quote may explain the title and the theme: "...the prophet sings not of the end of the world but of what has been done and what will be done and what is being done to some and not others, that the world is always ending over and over again in one place but not another and that the end of the world is always a local event, it comes to your country and visits your town and knocks on the door of your house and becomes to others but some distant warning, a brief report on the news, an echo of events that has passed into folklore..."

Prophet Song may actually seem too timely to some readers. It took Lynch four years to finish the novel before the era of Donald Trump and his recent dreams of an American dictatorship, before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The book reflects the daily news. The reviews have been favorable. According to Aimée Walsh, "If there was ever a crucial book for our current times, it's Paul Lynch's Prophet Song. The Limerick-born author's fifth novel imagines the Republic of Ireland slipping into totalitarianism after the rise of the rightwing National Alliance

party which seizes total control in response to trade unionists lobbying for increased teachers' wages. Civil liberties erode and civil war breaks out." I agree that Lynch's novel is "crucial" to our understanding of the world we live in. Though I like dystopian literature about the end of the world, however, I can honestly state that I admired Prophet Song, but I do not exactly like the novel—despite the fact I was drawn into its desolate world. Perhaps that is Lynch's intention. Bleak or not, Prophet Song is a best seller in Ireland. It is a work that can't be ignored.

Memories of Growing Up In Chicago: Recalling Life During the 20th Century

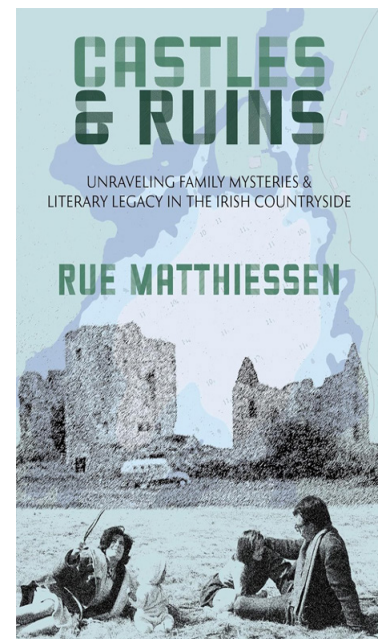
by Neal Samors (Author), Thomas O'Gorman (Author), Christopher Lynch (Author), & 2 more



See all formats and editions For those of us who grew up in Chicago during the 20th Century, especially from the 1930s through the 1980s, the experiences were often quite similar no matter which section of the city or the suburbs where you lived. We played games and sports in the streets, alleys, parks, beaches or "prairies", often each day during the four seasons, walked everywhere, travelled downtown with friends or families, attended religious institutions and either public or parochial schools, often attended colleges and universities, ate at a wide variety of neighborhood or downtown restaurants, went to movie theaters, learned to drive a car, dated, got engaged and

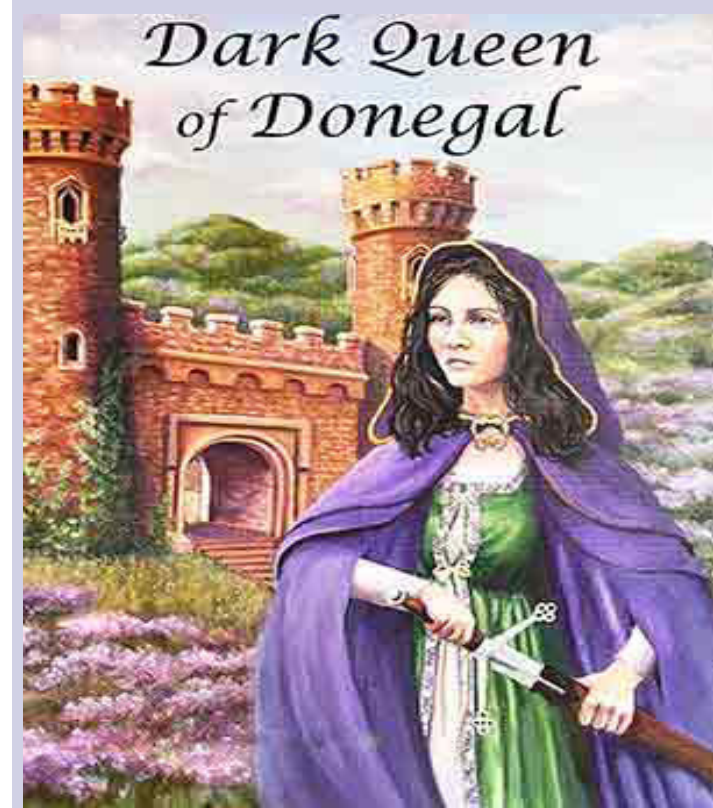
married, had a variety of jobs, raised children, and regularly visited with families who often lived close by, and helped to take care of parents and grandparents. During the 20th Century, we learned to deal with national and international crises like world wars and the Great Depression. The key thing was that we had a lot of shared experiences, some good, some bad, but it was a century of many memories. This book, which includes almost 50 interviews with Chicagoans and over 100 black and white photographs, will help the reader remember what Chicago was like during the period from 1900 to 2000. https://www.amazon.com/dp/0996141774?ref=pe_93986420_774957520

Castles & Ruins: Unraveling Family Mysteries & Literary Legacy in the Irish Countryside



by Rue Matthiessen Decades after spending a summer in the Irish countryside with her parents—author Deborah Love and National Book Award winner Peter Matthiessen—Rue takes her young family back to Ireland to revisit locales from that season in the sixties. As a guide, she has her mother's poetic book, Annaghkeen, named for the castle that overlooked their home in Galway. Both a rich and informative travelogue and a profoundly emotional memoir, Castles & Ruins celebrates the triumph of creative success while frankly appraising the often-terrible costs a family must pay for it. <https://www.amazon.com/Castles-Ruins-Unraveling-Mysteries-Countryside-ebook/dp/BOCJWCHRYJ>

Pen Women Press Presents DARK QUEEN OF DONEGAL by Mary Pat Ferron Canes with JR Foley

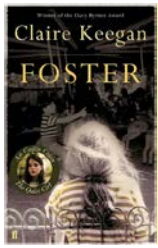


"Mary Pat Ferron Canes with JR Foley brings Ineen Dubh to thrilling life, showing how a mother's love for her son shapes and transcends history.

By delving into the inner life of this Scottish Princess and Irish Queen, Canes and Foley make a legendary woman real and do their ancestors proud."

- Mary Pat Kelly, bestselling author of Galway Bay

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Books Under Review

By Sabina Clarke



The Hidden Hand Behind The JFK Assassination

The author confides that he was so inspired by James Douglass' brilliant 2008 book JFK & The Unspeakable...Why He Died and Why It Matters—his first serious reading on the assassination—that it spurred his own intense interest in the case which led to his own investigation of who was behind the murder of our 35th President.

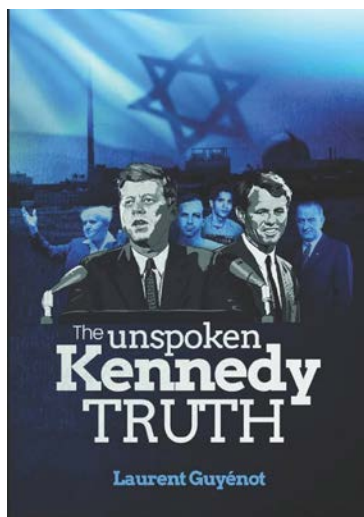
Guyenot credits the work of others while noting significant omissions in Douglass' book that fails to hold Lyndon Johnson or the State of Israel under the leadership of Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion culpable.

He methodically builds a case for the Israeli hand in the plot with some substantive facts and shines a spotlight on Lyndon Johnson, Kennedy's Vice President suggesting that he had foreknowledge of the plot to kill Kennedy and helped facilitate it and later bury a real investigation into Kennedy's death with the creation of the Warren Commission. Since the 1950s, JFK was a supporter of Arab nationalism and had no sympathy for Israel's colonizing land grabs and wanted to reduce the influence of the Israeli Lobby within our government.

But the prime motive for Israel's involvement in the murder of Kennedy was the development of their secret nuclear bomb—which Kennedy blocked. Global nuclear disarmament was Kennedy's goal as outlined in his 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. With Kennedy dead, Lyndon Johnson covertly gave Israel the greenlight to proceed with their Dimona Project while Kennedy's death brought to an abrupt end the massive pressure on Israel to end their nuclear program.

When Kennedy died, he was

mourned in the Arab world. In 2009, in front of the United Nations General Assembly, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi called for a new investigation into Kennedy's death. Two years later he was murdered and his country ravaged by civil war. Gaddafi stated publicly that Kennedy was killed by the Israelis because he insisted on monitoring the secret Dimona Project - a theory widely believed in the Arab countries. He reversed Eisenhower's foreign policy supporting Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and supported the return of



Palestinian refugees to their homeland—which enraged the Jewish State of Israel.

Guyenot believes that Israel and the Mossad were behind the killing of Robert Kennedy believing RFK would open a real investigation into his brother's murder once he became president. Both he and JFK were disturbed by Israel's undue influence on American Foreign Policy and forced the American Zionist Council to register as a foreign agent. With Johnson as President, Israel took control of U.S. foreign policy totally reversing Kennedy's U.S. -Israeli policy

Guyenot cites John Newman, a retired U.S. Army Major and Political Science Professor and

author of Oswald and the CIA in which Newman identifies James Jesus Angleton, Chief of the CIA's Counterintelligence Staff as intricately involved in the plot to kill Kennedy. Angleton was the CIA's exclusive liaison with Israeli intelligence and played a key role in Israel obtaining nuclear weapons.

In the same vein, Guyenot cites Jefferson Morley's book The Ghost; The Secret Life of CIA Spymaster James Jesus Angleton: "Angleton was the third most powerful man in the CIA and accountable to no one." His Counterintelligence operation was not the CIA but a rogue operation. It is obvious to both Newman and Morley that Angleton's Counterintelligence operation was involved in the preparation for JFK's assassination—concludes Guyenot.

In the U.S. Angleton is remembered as a mentally unstable insane man who caused great damage to the CIA's reputation; in Israel he is seen as a great benefactor of the Zionist state.

Laurent Guyenot poses this question- "Was the patriarch Joe Kennedy's reputation as an 'Adolf Hitler appeaser' -consequently his bad reputation among Jews—responsible for the deaths of JFK and RFK?" He says that many Jewish authors think so. The truth of the matter is that Joe Kennedy -like his sons after him—wanted peace not war.

When Joe Kennedy was Ambassador to London, he was against the U.S, aligning itself with England in the war against Germany. He recommended appeasement. For this he was seen as anti-Semitic and a Hitler sympathizer and called back from his post by President Franklin Roosevelt. On his return to the U.S. he said, "I am pro-peace. I pray, hope and work for peace." The same could be said of both his sons.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy was a determined peacemaker surrounded by neocons who wanted to push him into a third world war---in resisting, he may have signed his own death warrant.

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EcoWoman

by Fanny Barry

Eco Woman is an adventure story full of magic. Its reluctant hero, Maeve, has been waiting for greatness her entire 30 years and has nearly stopped believing it will arrive. But the greatness inside her hasn't died. It has lain dormant, awaiting the kiss of circumstances that will awaken it. Corrupt workers in Maeve's plant created a scam to enrich themselves. When they find out that Maeve, their boss, is on to them, they attempt to murder her. And they almost succeed. She's left for dead

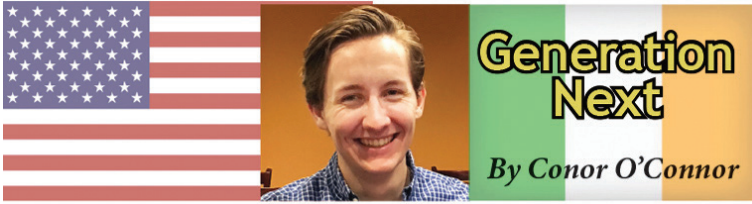


who've been watching over her since her birth and have decided to infuse her with magical powers—the Light—so she can take over their centuries old mission. Their time is coming to an end and their power is fading. They must pass the baton to Maeve to save the earth by pulling humanity back from the contaminating precipice humans have driven it to.

<https://www.amazon.com/ECO-WOMAN-TRANSFORMATION-Fanny-Barry/dp/B0CMZGVZW1>

on the side of the road, then rescued by three witches

More BookClub on page 38



Bipartisanship is Dead, and It's the GOP's Fault



The past few months have been chaotic for American politics. A fresh federal budget has not been passed since 2022, meaning that the government has been operating using continuing resolutions (which keep funding at the same level as the previously passed budget) since October of 2023. Kevin McCarthy lost his job as Speaker of the United States House of Representatives because he negotiated a stopgap funding deal with President Biden (who has to sign any budget passed by Congress into law before it can take effect) that upset the

reactionaries in his caucus.

Now, Speaker Johnson has indicated that he plans to do the very same thing that Speaker McCarthy did in order to fund the government. It remains to be seen whether he will lose his job in the same manner that his predecessor did, but there has already been criticism lobbed at him by the same folks who ousted McCarthy.

All of this drama is a direct result of the death of bipartisanship. In the 1980s, Democratic Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill worked with President Ronald Reagan to find compromises deemed acceptable to both parties at the time, especially with regard to foreign policy. Republican Speaker Newt Gingrich later worked with then-President Bill Clinton to temporarily eliminate the federal deficit, despite their mutual distaste for one another.

Today, right-wing hardliners in the US House of Representatives have held the chamber hostage for the past few months, meaning that any new budget measure agreed to by GOP officials would almost certainly have to pass the House with at least some Democratic support. Such an outcome would provoke the rage of these hardliners and almost certainly result in another ouster of Republican leadership.

Why is it so hard for us to find common sense solutions to the problems facing our country? For one thing, the definition of "common sense" seems to be very different depending on your party allegiance. For Republicans, censoring books they find objectionable and eliminating the separation of church and state seem to be common sense. Meanwhile, topics like immigration and sustainable welfare reform are pushed to the wayside for fear of "giving the other side a win."

As a result, our systems are at a breaking point. Thousands of migrants seeking better lives in the United States are prohibited from obtaining a work permit while they await their hearing(s) due to antiquated laws that haven't been updated in decades. Congress couldn't even come together to impeach and convict Donald Trump after he stoked an insurrection. Now, the specter of his first term has returned in full force.

The constant circus in Washington came about as a direct result of the GOP's distaste for good governance. Now, America is paying the price.



by Michael Gerard

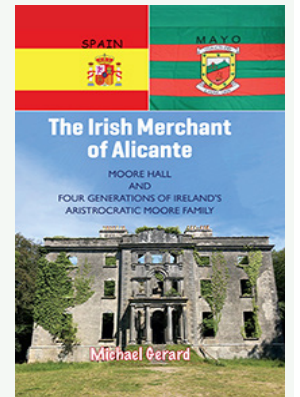
In 'The Irish Merchant of Alicante', we begin the story during the harsh Penal Laws that were introduced in 1695 to punish Catholics, especially the Catholic gentry, to force them back into the Protestant fold. Young George Moore faced these obstacles and as second son he could not inherit the Ashbrook estate, nor was he allowed to become a barrister or an officer in the British Army. He emigrated to Catholic Spain to join his mother's relatives, descendants of the Wild Geese who were established merchants there. George found great success in Spain and by the time the Penal Laws were relaxed he was a wealthy merchant with his own fleet of ships. His longing for his homeland never waned and he returned, purchased some 12,000 acres in his native Mayo and built Moore Hall in the 1790's, to become the First George Moore of Moore Hall. He had to swear allegiance to the King and had to follow the established landlord-tenant model; he did this in a fair and humane way, and he strove to establish more personal bonds with his tenants, including mastery of the Gaelic spoken by them.

In Ireland, George's Spanish-born eldest son, John, was quickly smitten by Wolfe Tone's ideals and he joined the ranks of the United Irishmen. He left his law studies and rushed to join with General Humbert's French expeditionary army that landed in County Mayo, in support of the 1798 Rebellion. John was appointed the first President of an Irish Republic - Connaught. He made the ultimate sacrifice for this 'treason', and the associated trauma caused the untimely death of his father George in late 1799. The second son, George, then took the reins at Moore Hall. He was an academic, a reclusive historian who was wooed and wed by Louisa Browne, a strong-willed beauty who took over the day-to-day operations of the Moore estate. This marriage to the niece of the notorious Denis Browne (Denis of the Rope), who had hanged dozens of 1798 rebels and prosecuted John, her husband's brother, caused a major split in the Moore family including the self-imposed exile of Catherine Moore, his mother and the family matriarch.

The third generation of the family was led by George Henry Moore, a great horseman, celebrated horse trainer and Mayo MP at Westminster, who was dearly loved by his Irish tenants. He spoke forcefully on their behalf in parliament, was widely believed to have taken the Fenian oath, and he led Mayo relief operations during the Great Famine that saved tens of thousands from starvation, at great personal expense to himself. The fourth generation Master of Moore Hall was George Augustus Moore, a complex man, a self-professed atheist who did not want to live on his Mayo estate while being financially dependent on the income derived from it. He inherited the estate as an immature eighteen-year-old who spent most of the following twenty years in Paris trying to become a painter, while his mother Mary, and uncle Joe Blake managed estate operations. After giving up on his painting ambitions he set his sights on a writing career, and against all the odds he became one of the most successful writers of his era with over fifty novels published. George Augustus was a lifelong bachelor, a cantankerous man who found himself at the helm of a landed estate at a time in Ireland that was full of agrarian unrest that threatened the imminent demise of the hated landlord system. Added to that mix was the upheaval of World War I and a significant rise in militant Irish nationalism at home in Ireland. His contentious personality ruffled the feathers of his artistic contemporaries like WB Yeats, Lady Gregory and AE Russell - and caused irreparable harm to his relationship with his long-suffering younger brother Maurice, who loved Moore Hall and strove to keep the family estate intact.

The Irish Merchant of Alicante is a must-read for members of the Irish diaspora and all those who wish to understand Irish history, and the unique personality that makes Irish people who they are.

<https://www.amazon.com/Irish-Merchant-Alicante-Generations-Aristocratic/dp/B0C7T9JTJ4>



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From Cross Lake to Chicago, Irish Astronomers Are Always Looking Up

By Michael O'Shea
michael.oshea@mail.utoronto.ca

There is a rich and long history of astronomy in Ireland, from the Stone Age burial monument at Newgrange aligned precisely with the winter sun, to the Irish monks who carefully observed the skies above to calculate the correct date of Easter – and developed the world's first algorithms in the process. From 1845 to 1917 the "Leviathan" telescope at Birr Castle (Co. Offaly) held the title of the world's largest, while the "Plough and the Star" flag of the Irish Citizen Army featured the Big Dipper and flew during the 1916 Easter Rising.

and newer observations in Chicago. **Long winter nights, endless summer days**

As a child, Carmel observed it was "never pitch, pitch dark, never" for several weeks in the summertime as the sun skimmed the horizon, never quite setting. Lying at around 54 degrees latitude, Ireland sits at the same distance from the equator as Southern Alaska, with long summer days and long winter nights. (Because of the Earth's tilt, as our planet orbits the Sun, half of the Earth gets more sunlight than the other. During the summer, it is the north hemisphere that receives more sunlight and daylight

the Irish *duileasc*) is an edible purplish-pink seaweed that thrived on the rocks between tides. Low in sodium, dillisk is chewy in texture and a great source of fiber.

"We call it dillisk. It grew on the rocks. They were flat leaves."

The spring low tide revealed particular rocks, very far out and gleaming with dillisk, calling out to be harvested.

Sometimes Carmel would accompany her mother on slippery trips out to the rocks, all while keeping a careful eye on the encroaching tide.

"You could be engrossed in picking dillisk as the tide was coming in. One blast would come in...before you know it, you could be swept out to sea."

The Moon and tides go "hand in

the ocean. So the sun would sink beet red, which we were told was for good weather."

Years later from her Chicago backyard, Carmel is still looking up, charting the setting and rising of the Moon, and noting the progress of the Sun from solstice to solstice. Recently, noting the Moon was rising unusually farther to the north – due to a double coincidence of celestial geometry – Carmel texted me.

"Absolutely beautiful, I didn't notice how north it was, but now once it's full I have noticed...it gets up the north more than I ever remember," she observed.

Constellations

It wasn't just the moon and these stars she kept track of though, she said. She remembered the stars, including the Evening Star, as well as Irish constellations like the Plough – as the Big Dipper is known in Ireland, Britain and other historically agricultural areas.

"Yes, from the old folks. They told us about the plough and the evening star."

The plough is not only an agricultural implement and a name for a grouping of stars – it's also deeply embedded in Irish politics and the struggle for independence. The "Plough and Star," in fact, appears on many flags of Irish political organizations throughout the 20th century. It first appeared on the flag of the Irish Citizen Army in 1914 and was flown over the Imperial Hotel during Easter Rising two years later. The plough was chosen for its many connections to Irish socialism, independence, and Christianity.

Astronomy Geniuses

Last year, I travelled to Chile as an astronomy ambassador with a wonderful organization called Astronomy in Chile Educator Ambassadors Program (ACEAP). While also visiting supersized telescopes probing the mysteries of the universe (Chile is perfect for astronomy and big budget telescopes because of its climate and geography), I felt luckiest to connect with Indigenous astronomers at Puribeter Natural Reserve and learn millennia-old cosmology and traditional names of constellations. I was taught how to use an ancient astronomy tool, *espejo de agua* (water mirror), a stone basin filled with very still water still used to reflect and study the night sky.

Upon my return to the United States, I thought about Irish astronomy and who kept this traditional knowledge alive. Though Greek and Roman names for constellations and the universe predominate in the United States and much of the West, every culture has its homegrown astronomy knowledge connected to Earth and sky, including the Irish and its knowledge keepers.

Reflecting on the Mayo astronomers of her childhood, who used the Moon to tell time and could sunsets to predict weather without GPS or clocks, Carmel said, "I think they were just geniuses, myself."

And I think Carmel is too.

Are you Irish or Irish-American and have astronomy knowledge, observations, or recollections you'd like to share? Get in touch with the author, Michael O'Shea, as he explores Irish astronomy, past, present, and future.



The Milky Way and Aurora Borealis over Galway, Ireland

Modern Ireland is home to cutting-edge astronomy facilities, such as the low-frequency radio telescope array known as I-LOFAR, built in 2017, and also located on the historic grounds of Birr Castle. For the aspiring astronomer, there are highly ranked astronomy departments at universities across the island, as well as the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies and the Armagh Observatory. Adjacent to the observatory is the Armagh Planetarium, founded in 1968 and the oldest planetarium in the UK and Ireland. More recently in 2023, a team from University College Dublin developed [Ireland's first satellite launched into space](#). Further south, Irish-Canadian Dr. Sean Dougherty is director of ALMA, a massive, multinational project in Chile comprising 66 radio telescope dishes spread out across miles of the Andean desert.

Another astronomer, closer to home, is Carmel Malone, originally of Cross Lake, Mayo, and a resident of Chicago's Northwest Side since the 1970s. Like that of many of her neighbors, her Mayo childhood was shaped by the rhythm and motion of planets, stars, the Sun and the Moon above her Atlantic Ocean community. I had a chance to sit down with Carmel last winter and hear her recollections of traditional Irish astronomy

hours).

"You'd be ready to go to bed at 11 o'clock. I'm saying to my mother one night, I said 'aren't you thinking about going to bed?' I think it was like 11 o'clock. It was pure bright outside."

Next thing she knew her cousin was coming to visit.

One night her sister-in-law went out with a camera to photograph the stars, but it was too bright.

"You could see the brightness of the Sun going right around and before you know it around 5 in the morning, up she comes. And oh my God, it was absolutely beautiful."

She kept track of the movements of the Moon, too, which pulled the tide out each day to reveal slippery dillisk covering the wet rocks. Dillisk (from

hand," Carmel noted. Dillisk, too.

The Moon was used to tell time... and direction

Carmel said they often relied on the sky for time of day and for directions. Unlucky for you if it was an overcast day: "There was no GPS if I was going north, south, east or west, but if it's an overcast day, you wouldn't know where you were, you'd be kinda stuck at that."

Her knowledge speaks to a natural awareness of the Moon and the sun and the stars, and how celestial events connected to weather on earth, and her location on edge of the Atlantic Ocean.

"If there were no clouds, it was a beautiful evening as the sun went down. And again, we were right by



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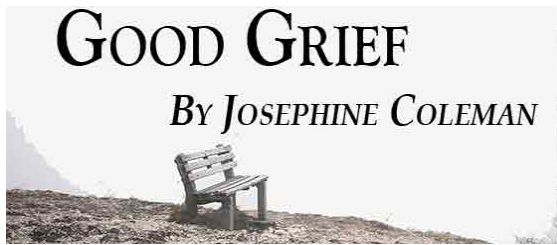
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Happy New Year! I recently underwent a knee revision surgery due to issues with the titanium implant from two years ago. It's been a challenging period, but I'm now back in physical therapy. My daughter is home from college so she's been my chauffeur. While waiting with my daughter in the clinic, a lady approached me and apologized for interrupting. She asked if I was from Ireland and shared that she discovered her connection

GOOD GRIEF

By JOSEPHINE COLEMAN



my family members had worked there over their summer holidays. The Folk Park, located outside Omagh in County Tyrone, is an open-air museum established in 1976. It revolves around the Mellon Homestead, the birthplace of Thomas Mellon, an Irish-American banker and founder of Mellon Bank. Thomas Mellon, born in 1813 immigrated to Pennsylvania at the age of five with his parents. He was also a lawyer and later a judge.

to Thomas Mellon through a DNA test. Excitedly, she mentioned her plans to visit Ireland this summer and brought up The Ulster American Folk Park. I mentioned I knew about it but hadn't visited in many years. A few of

1976. It revolves around the Mellon Homestead, the birthplace of Thomas Mellon, an Irish-American banker and founder of Mellon Bank. Thomas Mellon, born in 1813 immigrated to Pennsylvania at the age of five with his parents. He was also a lawyer and later a judge.

The Mellons' original house, built by Thomas's father, is still in its original location within the park. It was a two room cottage with an outhouse (bathroom yes we know all about them with the newspaper cut into squares hanging on a rusty nail with a bit of binder twine) It sat on twenty three acres .The family grew potatoes, flax and barley they even had their own Bog whoopie I'm sure the kids were thrilled it was so close to home. Our bog was a few miles away so you had no choice but to stay there from sunup to sun down. The Folk Park features thirty original buildings moved and restored from Northern Ireland and America, showcasing the story of Irish immigration to America over the centuries. The Old World section replicates streets with original houses, a police station, school, church, and, of course, Thomas Mellon's boyhood cottage. The park also boasts imported full-size wagons from America and a replica of Thomas Mellon's new home in Pennsylvania.

In the New World section, visitors can explore an old American street with general stores, log cabins, and the Fulton 1720 stone house, dismantled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and rebuilt stone by stone. My brother was a contractor and had the job of putting it all back together. I remember him telling my father every stone was numbered and mapped out for them. I can't remember how long it took but for sure it was quite a number of months . The park offers a captivating journey through time, complete with demonstrations such as candle making, embroidery, spinning wool, blacksmithing, and an open

house fire for cooking. Children can enjoy various activities, and there are even animals like sheep or goats, chickens and ducks on-site. I know for my children that was their favorite part especially when they got to feed them . Living abroad they don't get to see many animals close up.

The Ulster American Folk Park is a beautiful place to spend a day, open throughout most of the year. There is a cafe that sells hot food and drinks or you can bring a picnic plus an umbrella and maybe a raincoat. Our weather is so unpredictable. Yes, we have lots of rain showers in summer too. I highly recommend checking it out for a fun and educational experience, offering insights into the stories of Irish immigrants making their way to America, a journey we share in common. Some to return and share their experiences and some to return to be buried on Irish soil alongside their parents.

Also there's tons of folk parks all over Ireland. I grew up with one in my backyard, Gortin Glens . I've talked a lot about it in my previous columns. The best healthiest childhood experiences my parents could give us. Another one I visited long ago could maybe have been on our honeymoon. Bunratty castle and folk park . My niece was married there unfortunately it was around Christmas and my children were so young but looking at her beautiful wedding photos made me want to take a trip back there . Don't forget to stop by Dirty Nellie's for some entertainment and Craic.

Well that's all from me. My daughter will be going on a teaching course to Spain for six weeks. She also wanted to visit France and stop by Ireland on her way back to the states . I might just jump on a plane and meet her there. Springtime back home is always beautiful with all the wild flowers, in the fields, especially my favorite daffodils . It's May or June here before you see a spring flower but I quit planting them as I live on a park and the squirrels dug up every single bulb and ate them. For Easter dinner I like to buy a few bunches of daffodils and tulips, just a little reminder of home on my table . Well stay warm and cozy, our winter isn't over yet.

So bye for now!



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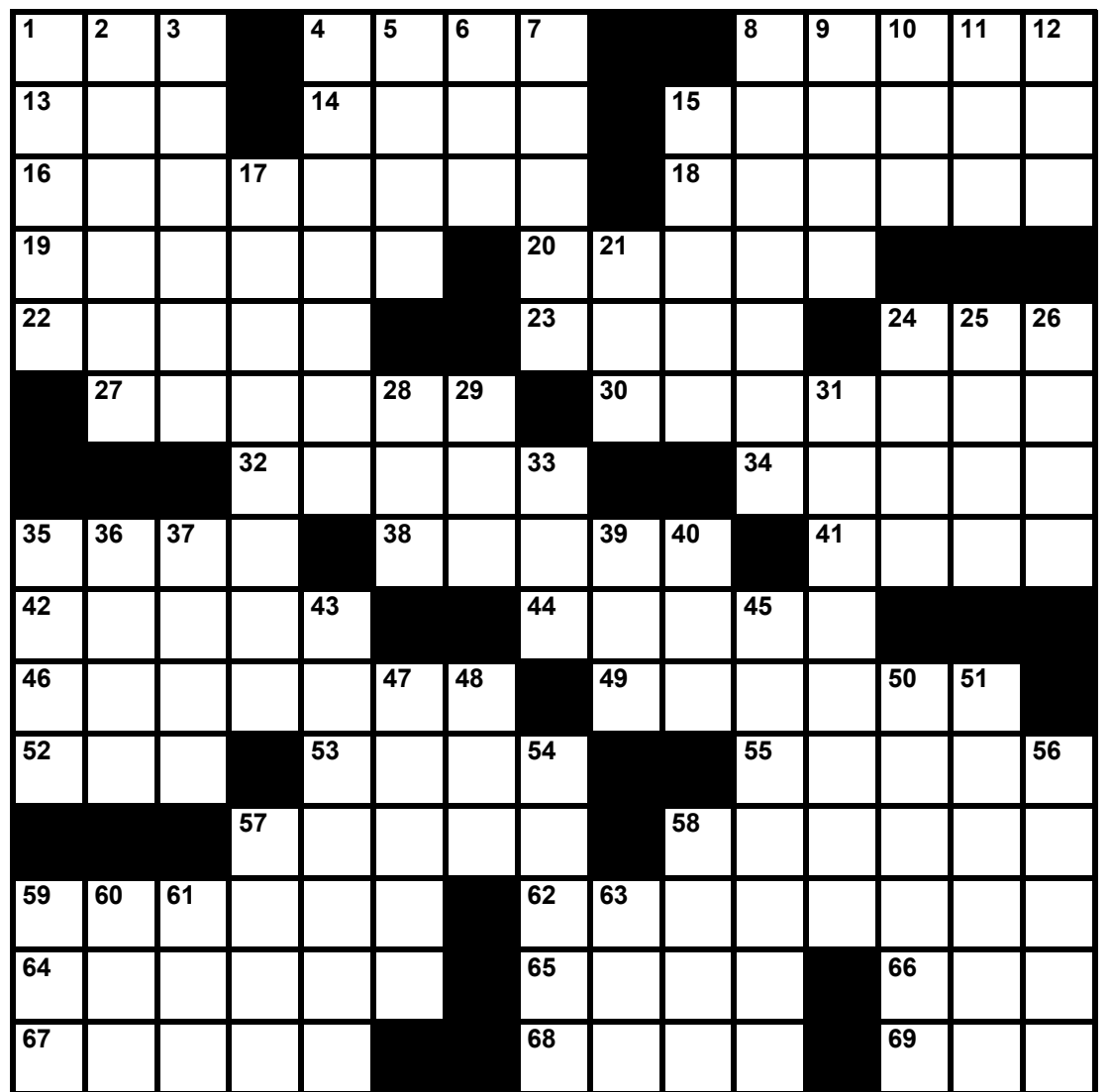
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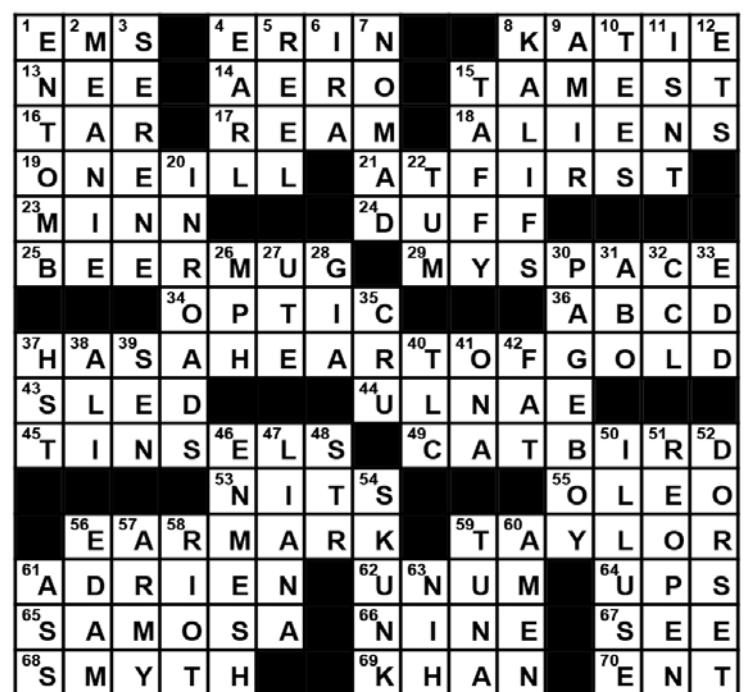
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- 15. Takes money off the top
- 17. Classic Disney film that includes "The Nutcracker Suite"
- 21. Big TV maker formerly
- 24. Nagy of Hungary
- 25. Ooze
- 26. Office aide, abbr.
- 28. DNA cousin
- 29. Unhappy
- 31. Toward the source of the river
- 33. Mormons, initially
- 35. Recipe amt., abbr.
- 36. Santa's cry- 2 words
- 37. Angers
- 39. Company abbreviation
- 40. Before, to a poet
- 43. Dirty politician, at times
- 45. Talker
- 47. Called balls and strikes
- 48. Blood relative, for short
- 50. Be absorbed slowly
- 51. Double agents
- 54. Cover anew, as a plot
- 56. Chips in the pot
- 57. Act the siren
- 58. Loudness measure
- 59. Redbox rental
- 60. Shoe box marking
- 61. Opera venue, The ____
- 63. Attempt

JANUARY Answers



by Myles Mellor

Across

- 1. Much worn
- 4. Short comic play
- 8. "Night on my side" singer, ____ Hayes
- 13. Place for polish, perhaps
- 14. ____-European
- 15. Irish rugby great, Johnny ____
- 16. Sight at night, 2 words
- 18. He played Chekov on "Star Trek", Walter ____
- 19. Deeply absorbed
- 20. Electrical systems
- 22. Pulls to a stop, with in
- 23. Apex
- 24. "Love ____ Many-Splendored Thing"- 2 words
- 27. Helicopter blades
- 30. Jumps to conclusions
- 32. Record
- 34. Belgian city in W.W. I fighting
- 35. Indicating pronoun
- 38. Make confused
- 41. Back-to-school time month, abbr.
- 42. Big first name in horror movies
- 44. Walk around proudly
- 46. Irish WWE great
- 49. Too much, French - 2

words

- 52. + (abbr.)
- 53. Ruler's title in Kuwait
- 55. Electric car
- 57. Run out, as a subscription
- 58. Naval recruit
- 59. Shy
- 62. Northern Ireland Parliament Buildings
- 64. Took evasive action
- 65. Writer Sarah ____ Jewett
- 66. ____ Anne de Beaupré
- 67. Keep (from doing)
- 68. Any color changer, essentially
- 69. Highway double curve
- Down
- 1. None of the above, on a survey
- 2. Temporary replacement car
- 3. Texas border city, 2 words
- 4. Animated Bart
- 5. Rope feature
- 6. Chapel vow, 2 words
- 7. Island nation east of Fiji
- 8. Science of measurement of the earth
- 9. Former partners
- 10. Mountain, for short
- 11. "You can't mean me!?"
- 12. "Crouching Tiger" director Lee

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Looking to escape the cold winter weather? Look no further than right here in the Chicago area. The Irish community is serving up all sorts of entertainment over the next few months, from an Irish Social Dance weekend, to concerts, and CD releases. Sure to warm you and cheer you.

Hooley In the Park

Led by new general manager Michael Bennett, Gaelic Park is experiencing a robust post-COVID cultural revival that includes major Irish Singing events, music sessions, and concerts. Hooley in the Park, planned for Friday March 22nd to Sunday March 24th at Gaelic Park, builds upon this revival, and offers fun and entertainment of a most unique sort. According to Webster's dictionary, a hooley is "an Irish party usually with music." Hooley In the Park is a weekend music festival, with Irish Social Dance and Country Music being front and center.

Hooley is the brainchild of Brendan Houlihan, Gaelic Park Board member and Irish Social Dance aficionado. Houlihan began Céilí dancing at Gaelic Park at age 21, then graduated to Set dancing, and most recently Social Dancing. He has been running dance events at Gaelic Park for about the past 12 years, but this is his first big event in Irish Social Dancing. Like me, you may be having difficulty understanding what Irish Social Dancing is. Irish Social Dancing is nothing like the high-flying Step dancing made popular by the Michael Flatleys of the world. Nor is it like Céilí or Set dancing, which resembles American Square Dancing. Rather, Irish Social Dancing is simply Irish-themed jive, waltz, quick step, and two step dances, set to Irish music or Country-Western music. Dances are performed by couples. Marvelous examples of Irish jive dancing can be found on You Tube if you search for "All Ireland Jiving Championships 2023 - Final." Couples look like they are having tremendous fun.

Regarding "Hooley," Brendan says, "It will be all about the craic." (Note to those needing vocabulary assistance- 'craic' is an Irish word that means fun or a good time. For example, hiking trips are described as good craic, people who are fun to be around are good craic, enjoyable nights out are good craic. Thanks to blogger Sami Koitz for the translation, and examples).

The Hooley weekend commences on Friday night with a one-hour Irish country jive dance workshop followed by live music at 8pm with Stuart Moyles of Westport County Mayo, and young Jack Keough of County Wicklow. While you may not be familiar with either Stuart or Jack, they enjoy great fame in Ireland and in the Social Dance world. Moyles plays guitar and sings and is the winner of the Hot Country TV "Best Social Dancing Artist" award. Keogh's star is rising at a rapid rate, as he established himself at the very young age of 14 years old, with his wildly popular debut song "Dreaming of You." Check it out on YouTube by searching Jack Keogh "I'm Dreaming of You."

Dance workshops will be taught by Gerard Butler; no, not the actor, but nine-time All-Ireland

Dance Champion originally from County Roscommon. Now living in County Tyrone, Gerard has been teaching dance for over 25 years to all levels of dancers, both in Ireland and abroad. At a young age his father taught him Céilí and Set dancing while his mother taught him Social Dancing

On Saturday morning at 11am, Juniors ages 7-14 years old get their chance to learn country jive dance at a workshop taught by Butler. This is followed in the afternoon by a similar workshop for adults and all ages. Saturday night at 7pm is "not to be missed" dancing and music. Moyles and Keogh appear again, along with Myles McVeigh and the Hoyle Brothers. These gentlemen are no strangers to Gaelic Park, having just performed a wildly successful Barn Dance event in October 2023, and at Gaelic Park Irish Fest. The band is based in Chicago, where they are known for long running sessions at the Empty Bottle, and "hard country honky tonk."

On Sunday there will be another two-hour jive workshop followed by continuous music for the rest of the day. Tickets can be purchased on the Gaelic Park website. This event is great value at \$90 for a weekend pass if you purchase by March 1st. After that the price goes up. Kids age 14 y/o and under passes are available for \$50. If a weekend pass is not your cup of tea, individual tickets can be purchased for single workshops or concert. Whether you want to learn jive, improve your jive, or just listen to great music, it will be a great weekend for that.

Reverie Road debut album, and upcoming concert
Luminaries Katie Grennan and her

husband John Williams are familiar names to Chicago area Irish music aficionados. Although most IAN readers need no introduction to these two, their most recent endeavors, and new collaborations may not be as familiar to our readers.

In the mid 90's, accordionist Williams and fiddler Winifred Horan were founding members of a band called Solas (Irish word for "light"). Born and raised on the Southwest Side of Chicago (where I grew up as well), Williams is internationally regarded as one of the foremost players of Irish music today. With five All-Ireland titles to his credit, John is the only American-born competitor ever to win first place in the Senior Concertina category. His additional talents on flute, button accordion, bodhran, and piano make him a much sought-after multi-instrumentalist.

Horan was born in New York City to Irish parents and studied piano and Irish fiddle playing at a young age. After graduating from the New England Conservatory in Boston, Massachusetts, where she studied classical violin, she played with multiple orchestras, including the Boston Pops Orchestra, Cherish the Ladies in 1990 and Solas. She is also a nine-time champion Irish step-dancer and an All-Ireland fiddle champion, having won an All-Ireland Junior Championship at age eleven. Horan lives in New Hampshire and is currently a member of the faculty of The New England Conservatory.

Back to the Solas story..... Although Williams left the group in the late 90's, Horan continued to play with this group for many more years. In 2017, Solas



announced an indefinite hiatus. Only recently acquainted with Solas' music, I have had to depend on prior published reviews of Solas' musical expression, leading me to believe Solas was a band full of boisterous, driving energy on one hand, sublime subtleties on the other, never afraid to venture beyond traditional Irish roots, always eager to experiment. With Solas now gone, Williams and Horan reunited in 2022 to form a new band, Reverie Road. According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word reverie means "an instrumental piece suggesting a dreamy or musing state." Williams intended exactly that definition when he described the meaning of the group's name saying "Each member has such extensive experience in the performing arts that we realized we've been down a variety of roads independently. Together, our talents now push us beyond the next horizon... with Reverie Road".

The band is composed of 4 members: Williams, Horan, Katie Grennan, and Utsav Lal. Katie Grennan was born and raised in Wexford, PA but now resides in the Chicagoland area. She began playing violin at age 4 years old, focusing initially on classic violin, and later transitioning to Irish traditional fiddle. Katie was the fiddler in the popular Celtic-fusion band Gaelic Storm for over five years, recorded a number of solo albums, and teaches fiddlers of all ages and levels. Also, a champion Irish dancer, Katie holds a position as a lead instructor at the Trinity Academy of Irish Dance based in Chicago. A fun fact about Katie is that she studied accounting and Psychology at University of Notre Dame, but music eventually prevailed.

Horan met new addition Utsav Lal at the New England Conservatory. Lal is a most unusual pianist and Indian classical musician. Lal (Young Steinway Artist) has lived in Delhi, Dublin and now resides in New York City. He is known as the "Raga Pianist," innovating by playing Indian Classical Music on a western instrument. In "Ragas to Reels," he also fuses Irish traditional tunes with Indian music. In adding Lal, Reverie Road appears to continue the Solas tradition of being unafraid to experiment.

Their debut album is called simply "Reverie Road." It contains 11 instrumental-only pieces, weaving Irish and Scottish musical traditions with French waltzes, and upbeat reels and jigs. The first track is called "The Gap of Dreams," and is comprised of three orchestrated jigs. This is Katie's favorite on the album because she loves the tunes, and the unique arrangement with its neat key variations.

Reverie Road will be appearing in concert at Old Town School of Folk Music, 4545 N Lincoln Ave, Chicago IL on Thursday Feb 8th at 8pm, Szold Hall. Tickets are available to the general public on the Old Town School website for \$28, or \$26 for members. Reverie Road the album is available on the Reverie Road website.

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-Featured artists
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Brian Ó hAirt, Portland OR

-Workshop participants choir
-Old Town School of Folk Music Women's Choir led by Kathy Cowan
-American Irish Solo Singers
-Chicago Irish Singers Club

Feb 25th Chicago Gaelic Park 330-500pm

-Featured artists
Eimear Arkins, St Louis MO
Brian Ó hAirt, Portland OR

-Workshop participants choir
-Pat Broaders- Chicago area Irish singer and guitarist
-American Irish Solo Singers
-Gaelic Park choir
-Chicago Irish Singers Club



GETTING TO KNOW THE IRISH!

BY TINA BUTLER



Patrick Finucane

I recently wrote about the new Late Late show host, Patrick Kielty and that his father Jack was tragically murdered by the UFF/UDA. (Ulster freedom fighters) This month I want to honor and remember another Patrick. Patrick Finucane an Irish lawyer who was also assassinated by the UDA.

A sidenote about lawyers. There are more lawyers in America than anywhere in the world. America is the most litigious country in the world. I've heard kids say to other kids

I'm going to sue you. That is a sad statement to come from a child, he/she naturally heard it from an adult in the home. (However, Germany is also becoming "sue" happy & soon will be our legal competitor)

I've always admired lawyers and their analytical skills but I'm not envious of the stress and headaches they must endure. And the possibility of bodily harm by a client or defendant, etc... I bet in law school they don't emphasize how dangerous it is to be a lawyer and the risk factor that



This photo of solicitor Pat Finucane (right) leaving court with republican Pat McGeown was compiled into a package by a British Army agent and then given to the UDA squad who would eventually kill Finucane goes with this profession.

Patrick Finucane was a lawyer who specialized in criminal

defense work. He gained a lot of notoriety & distinction due to his work against the English government in several human rights cases.

Finucane was born in Belfast, Co. Antrim. His family was forced out of their home as many other families in the area were during the troubles.

A few of Finucane's siblings were in the IRA. His brother Seamus was arrested alongside Bobby Sands. Seamus was sentenced to prison for some petty crimes. Bobby Sands was also sentenced to prison for firearm possession.

Finucane's best-known client was hunger striker Bobby Sands.

Finucane was shot in his home in front of his wife and small children. The gun man knocked the door down with a sledgehammer and shot him 14 times. The Ulster Defense Association claimed they killed Finucane because he was in the IRA. It was later confirmed by both the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) and the Stevens Report found that he was not a member of the IRA.

I would prefer to write about positive stories & lighter material but when I reached out to Cliff, my goal was to share everything Irish. Also, my heart breaks for this family and I will continue to write

painful stories otherwise I'd be disregarding half of the news.

In addition to all things Irish, I wanted to start from the beginning. My first article was about the Bronze age in Ireland. Ireland had a population of roughly 100,000 people, the Bronze age was 2,000 before Jesus.

Finucane's son is a Sinn Fein politician & lawyer. Such a beautiful tribute to his late father, by walking in his footsteps.

There is a Patrick Finucane center in Belfast. It is a human rights center named in his honor. It's a non-party political group that helps loved ones who have lost family members involved in the conflict in N. Ireland.

Smidin Gaeilge

Human Rights- cearta daonna, Innocent-neamhchiontach, Lawyer-dliodoir

"Human Rights are not a privilege conferred by government they are every human being's entitlement by virtue of his humanity." Mother Teresa

"If you don't defend human rights lawyers who will defend human rights?" Rosemary Nelson

If you have any questions, please contact me: Molanive@yahoo.com

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Fr. George Lane, S.J.'s Life Celebrated with Mass in Historic Church of the Holy Family

By Richard Barry

A recent Memorial Mass at Church of the Holy Family, 1080 W. Roosevelt Road, brought together hundreds of former parishioners, friends, family members, historians, and preservationists to celebrate Rev. George A. Lane, S.J.'s role in saving from demolition and restoring to service Chicago's second oldest church. Founded in 1857 by Dutch immigrant Rev. Arnold Damen, S.J. Holy Family was home to thousands of Irish immigrants seeking a new life in Chicago.

Fr. Lane died in November, 2023, at age 89. Genealogy research by Fr. Lane's brother, Gregory, reveal details of the family's deep Irish roots.

The first Lane to immigrate to Chicago from Charleville, County Cork, was Fr. Lane's great-great uncle, James Lane (1803-1897). A colorful member of the family, James arrived in the city in 1835 at age 37, became a real estate auctioneer, butcher, grocer and hotelkeeper. He served two years as an alderman of Chicago's old 9th Ward. Lane was an investor in real estate, bonds and mercantile properties. One of his real estate investments, Lane Place, exists today as Orleans Street.

Fr. Lane's great-great grandparents, Thomas Lane and Johanna Gleeson, were married in 1836 in Charleville, County Cork, but died in 1853 in transit to America on a "coffin ship" together with three of their six children. One of the surviving children,

James H. Lane, was Fr. Lane's great-grandfather. According to Gregory Lane's research, at the outset of the Civil War in 1861, James joined the 23rd Illinois Infantry Regiment, "Mulligan's Irish Brigade," led by Col. James Mulligan, and served as lieutenant until his discharge in 1864. After the war, he became a plumber and later worked for the Peoples Gas, Light and Coke Company and died at 83 in 1921.

Fr. Lane's maternal great grandparents, John Kenney, Sr. and Julia Byrne, immigrated to St. Louis in 1850 from Counties Waterford and Wicklow.

All who knew Fr. Lane, a modest, self-effacing Jesuit priest of nearly 70 years, who worked and led Loyola Press, a Catholic publishing house, for nearly 50 years, were amazed at his perseverance and persistence in responding to the desperate pleas of Holy Family's parishioners to save the historic Victorian Gothic church from being demolished in 1990.

A recent rare Chicago Sun-Times editorial <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2023/12/18/24004861/chicago-architecture-churches-synagogues-rev-george-lane-preservation-holy-family-editorial>

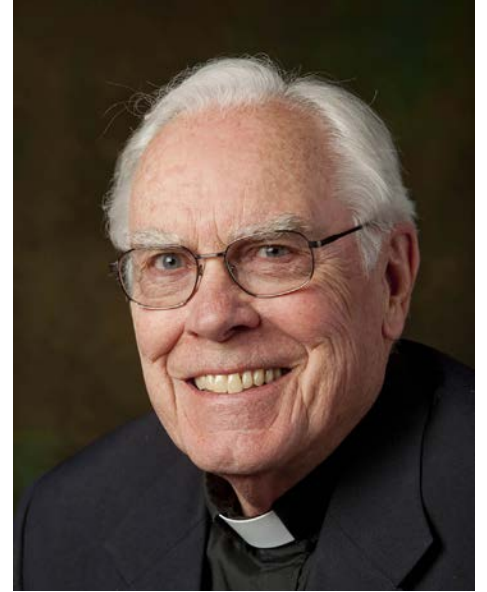
praised Fr. Lane who "courageously bucked his bosses at the Chicago Jesuit Province and helped lead the fight to save and restore Holy Family."

Rev. Jeremiah Boland, former parish administrator, now pastor of Our Lady

of Perpetual Help, Glenview, preached a homily at the Memorial Mass about Fr. Lane, quoting Rev. Brian Paulson, S.J., a former Jesuit provincial, who told the Chicago Tribune, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/obituaries/ct-george-lane-obituary-20231214-jv2xznmjwndv3i46ikwxjlljite-story.html>

"Father Lane's holy disobedience paid off, and the world is a better place."

Holy Family Church is one of five public buildings to survive the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which began on the property of Holy Family parishioners Patrick and Catherine O'Leary, who immigrated from County Cork.



Children playing on one of the many fields at Gaelic Park

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 - Received ISHA Award for High School Football Referee
 - Active With DePaul Basketball Program
 - Received Irish Lawyers Award by the Irish Bar in Dublin
- Paid for by Committee To Elect Russ Hartigan Judge. A copy of our report filed with the State Board of Elections is (or will be) available on the board's official website or for purchase from the State Board of Elections, Springfield, Illinois.

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Trinity Irish Dance Company Remaking History- Part 2

Chicago to celebrate their own internationally-renowned Trinity Irish Dance Company and their newest world premieres at the Auditorium Theatre - March 3rd

Called "impossibly complex" by The New York Times and "sophisticated and commanding" by the Los Angeles Times, the Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC) continues to reinvent the possibilities for Irish dance with fresh new work, paving the way for this beloved cultural form to breathe and evolve in an integrity-filled way.

In the midst of a 17-city USA season that will take this company of elite performing artists from Anchorage to Newark and St Louis to Los

Angeles, TIDC will return home March 3rd for its annual engagement at the Auditorium Theatre, presenting a mixed repertory program with two highly-anticipated world premieres, special guest artists, TIDC classics, and live music from the ever-popular TIDC Band.

TIDC Founding Artistic Director and recent inductee into the Irish American Hall of Fame Mark Howard and Associate Artistic Director Chelsea Hoy unleash their newest work: Taking the Mick, a full company piece that takes the versatility of TIDC's dancers to a new level. Taking the Mick is a hybrid dance with an implied narrative that juxtaposes heroic-level technical virtuosity with a big

dollop of whimsy, delivered through the aesthetic of early 1900's Vaudeville.

"Themes of social mobility, one upmanship, chasing power, struggle, faith, fickleness and shifting loyalties seem to be as prevalent now as they were then," explains co-choreographer Hoy. "With eclectic music and multi-genre movement, this piece jumps across time dimensions and movement genres."

Michael Curry, known for his notable work from Katy Perry to Lion King on Broadway will be donating his time to the non for profit TIDC by designing special theatrical props while longtime Hubbard Street lighting designer, Julie Ballard will light up Howard and Hoy's creation by turning the Auditorium stage into a Vaudevillian one.

"We've created an eye popping, alternative universe set to a backdrop of 1945 Bing Crosby meets 1972 Planxty. A gaggle of hapless yet brilliant, good natured, and unruly characters deliver their unique brand of whimsical percussive prowess," says co-choreographer Howard. "As artists, Chelsea and I are painfully aware that the world currently needs a piece like this. Instead of merely having our audience respond to the poetics of what we do, we are offering laughs and thrills. Looking at historical showbiz archetypes and upgrading through a collage of forward looking movement allows us to keep dance alive. Without reinvention, traditions can die."

P.O.V. is a world premiere choreographed exclusively for TIDC by elusive, renowned choreographer Harrison



Choreographers Mark Howard and Chelsea Hoy with characters from their newest work 'Taking the Mick'

McEldowney. Utilizing cutting edge technology, audiences will be given a unique opportunity to experience TIDC's fast-paced movement genre from the point of view of a dancer. Hoy describes, "Audiences will have the chance to be in the eye of the storm of a rapid dance piece- as a dancer, I can attest that it's a thrill."

Additional repertoire that celebrates the company's evolution and range will include: Howard's Black Rose which was reset for TIDC's summer Japan tour, Soles, Push, Communion, and Howard and Hoy's first collaboration, An Sorcas. TIDC's stand-out four-piece band, led by Killarney-born, New York-based guitar player and singer/songwriter Brendan O'Shea, will present two original new songs.

Amongst other surprises, appearances by special guests will include dynamic tap artist Star Dixon of Chicago's M.A.D.D.

Rhythms, Irish-born, virtuoso All-Ireland champion flute and tin whistle player Larry Nugent, and

students from the Irish Music School of Chicago, directed by Sean Cleland, representing the future of traditional Irish music.

"As the founder and director of the Irish Music School of Chicago, I have been continuously amazed and excited by the scope and direction of my friend Mark Howard's Trinity Irish Dance Company!" shares Cleland. "I am delighted and grateful for the inclusion of my students in what is shaping up to be another exciting TIDC performance that stretches the boundaries of what is possible for Irish music and dance."

March 3rd's epic performance is only part of this season's creative outpouring from this cutting-edge non-for-profit company. This month, they're celebrating the launch of a

brand new production called "JIG," opening with an 8-city tour across the US. Howard has dreamt up a revitalized way of presenting TIDC, bringing the beloved TIDC band to the forefront and blending original new music with nine incredibly virtuosic dancers. A groundbreaking, alternative approach to an immersive theater experience, JIG will redefine what is possible for Irish music and dance.

Hoy describes, "The magic of JIG lies in its authenticity. In a non-traditional setting, Mark has doubled down on TIDC's ability to break through the fourth wall and reduce the distance between audiences and artists."

Howard's lifelong mission to elevate communities through what he calls the "power and grace of Irish dance" has informed more than thirty years of pioneering work. He describes this new way of

presenting TIDC: "At a time when the world needs healing, I see the dancers and musicians of JIG as movement and sound doctors always

searching for something real, something with humanity in it. They are powerful and determined connectors that surround audiences with a unique force field of positive energy, emphasizing the critical importance of savoring the joyful moments. Dance and music are commodities that we consume with our imaginations. As humans, we often personify art to help us understand our own humanity. The dances and songs are alive because we are, and I believe the inverse is also true."

For tickets for March 3rd at the Auditorium Theatre, visit auditoriumtheatre.org

To view TIDC's full tour schedule, visit trinityirishdancecompany.com

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WORLD PREMIERE - MARCH 3, 2024
AUDITORIUM THEATRE - CHICAGO, IL
 choreography by Mark Howard & Chelsea Hoy

Connections



By Elyse Lyons Pfandler

Human connections are when people engage in vulnerable interactions where each person is heard, known, and valued. Every day we look for these connections with other people and when these connections are found in unusual ways, they are sometimes the most meaningful.

meet her.

Sinéad lives on a farm in Foxford, County Mayo, and is married with two children. I live in Beverly on the Southside of Chicago and am married with three children. Learning about similarities and some differences we have had as moms raising children the same ages has been a valuable relationship and one that has taught me lessons.

Sinéad would send me pictures of her son feeding their lamb a bottle, chasing chickens, loading wheelbarrows, running on quiet roads, and videos of her children searching for shamrocks, cows, and horses with a quiet loveliness. I would send pictures of my kids at White Sox games, going to my brother's wedding, pool parties, visits to the zoo, a trip to New York City, some beach trips, with city loveliness.

About a year ago, Sinéad told

lace to make beautiful napkins and pillowcases. I just never knew that this went back to a previous generation.

My children write letters to Sinéad's children and they have sent packages to us. She asks me about American schools, like do we have a canteen in the school? I found out quickly that it was a cafeteria and told my children about it. My children wanted me to ask Sinead if they have McDonald's happy meals in Ireland. They do.

In a recent conversation we had Sinéad asked "Is Nollaig na mBan a thing in America? Me and my friends are getting together." I explained that it is not as popular in America but that some friends and I have celebrated Women's Little Christmas in the past. I was getting ready to send her a quote I saw on Facebook that day when she sent me the exact same quote! "The circle of women around us weaves invisible nets of love that carry us when we're weak and sing with us when we are strong." (Sark). It took my breath away that this cousin who was thousands of miles from me and whom I had never physically met sent me this because she believes that we are in it together in some way.

We are all in it together as women and building each other up and celebrating where we are all at in our lives makes us all better friends, moms, wives, and humans.

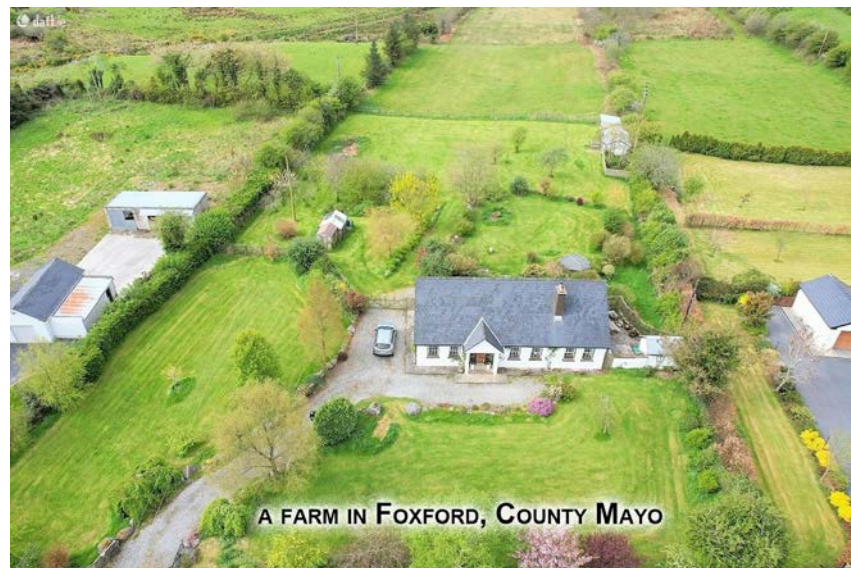
I love that I get to teach my children about the daily life that

Sinéad and her family experience in Ireland and I hope that this keeps us all connected so that our children can be connected. Because connections are what we are all searching for, right? We want our children to connect with each other and experience things that they never have.

We hope to meet one another soon. It would be wonderful if

her children could experience an American baseball game and my children could experience feeding a baby lamb a bottle in their cousin's backyard.

The world does become a smaller and brighter place when we chat and connect with one another. Have a chat with someone today, you never know the journey you will go on.



A FARM IN FOXFORD, COUNTY MAYO

It seems to me that Irish people especially love to make connections and connect with their Irish identity in some way. Living in Chicago, I see connections wherever I go. I even ask my husband who he ran into when he's back from a store. My parents talk in great detail about someone from the neighborhood who has some exciting news and we try to make the connection of how I know them. Most of the time, relationships grow after meeting someone in person. In today's world with modern technology, it's easy to make real connections with people you've never met face to face.

I have had the fortunate experience of creating one of those real connections with a cousin, Sinéad, who lives in Ireland after we became friends on Facebook seven years ago.

We began messaging each other with just a few words of politeness and this has grown to lengthy messages, stories, and the journeys we are each on. We have sent over 200 messages and hundreds of pictures and videos to learn about one another and our families. In 1998, I traveled to Ireland to meet Sinéad's mom and see the home where my great-grandmother and Sinead's grandfather lived, but I didn't get the chance to

me all about the buzz in Mayo of President Biden arriving and driving down the N17. She sent pictures of her six-year-old son Liam (same name as one of my sons) running down the road wearing a United States flag.

She told me how her dad swept off the front wall and hung new flags to be ready for the Americans to come by. The way she described this day and the videos and pictures allowed me to be there with her.

I told her all about the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade and how I took my children to the Irish store to buy Irish sweaters made in Ireland. I sent the videos of us riding on the float in the downtown parade and shared pictures from the St. Patrick's Day Queen Contest.

We marveled together over the day and it was like she joined me at the contest. Wanting to learn more about each other's daily lives links us and allows us to find a connection that is surprising and valued.

This relationship with Sinéad has become one that is both endearing and educational. She has been able to share things about my family that I had no idea about. My great-grandmother Anne had a sister that died from the Spanish Flu and was a lace maker. This made perfect sense to me because my grandmother Rose often used

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As we all learned from our history lessons, Ireland was neutral in World War II. As a youngster I recall a bomb was dropped allegedly by mistake by the British on the banks of the Castletown River in Dundalk, County Louth in the dark of night. Thankfully it never exploded. Neutral or not, it has been revealed that during the war Ireland was quietly helping the Allies in several ways, most especially by sharing weather data with

Britain. Maureen Flavin, a postal clerk on a remote stretch off the northwest Irish coast, probably without knowing helped determine the outcome of the Second World War. She died on December 17th in a nursing home in Bulmullit situated close to the post office where she used to work. She was 100 years old according to a member of her family. The events that led Ms. Flavin to her global significance began in 1942

when she saw and answered an ad for a post office job located in the remote coastal village of Blacksod Point. She got the job and learned the post office also served as a weather station. Hence, her duties included recording and transmitting weather data to the British. She worked diligently but never knew where her weather reports were going. In fact, they were part of the Allied war effort. Ireland's position on Europe's northwestern edge provided an early sense of weather heading toward the continent. I became involved in this amazing story and had the privilege of watching the film *The Longest Day*, learning if there was going to be an



Maureen Flavin Sweeney (98) getting a special US House of Representatives honour in Belmullet, Co Mayo.

invasion at Normandy or elsewhere, weather was the most important issue so American troops could land. General Dwight D.

Eisenhower, in charge of the assault decided to send more than 160,000 troops, 12,000 aircraft and an estimated 7,000 sea vessels to invade a 50-mile



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stretch of beach along the Normandy region of the French coast.

Forecasting turned out to be an essential part of the Allies most famous gambit of the war - D-Day. The Invasion aimed at gaining a foothold on the European mainland. General Dwight Eisenhower who led the assault is said to have spent two meticulous years planning to send more than 160,000 troops, and an estimated 7,000 sea vessels to invade a 50-mile stretch of beach along the Normandy region of the French Coast. As a result, the The Allies settled on June 5th 1944 , a day forecasting a full moon for visibility, low tides, providing easier access to the beach. An invasion would also depend on calm seas for landing. At the time there existed primitive technology, no satellites, no computers and to launch an assault weather was significant. Meanwhile Ms. Flavin's work orders had increased dramatically. She and her colleagues were sending weather reports not every six hours but every hour of the day. In a documentary in 1944 Ms. Flavin recalled in a documentary made by RTE, Ireland's public broadcaster in 2019. On her 21st birthday, June 3rd during a late-night shift: midnight to four am, she checked her barometer and it registered a rapid drop in pressure, indicating a likelihood of rain or stormy weather. Her report went from Dublin to England's meteorological headquarters. Flavin immediately received an unusual series of calls about her work via a female with a British accent asking "please check, followed by please repeat!" Fearing she made a mistake Flavin asked the post mistress's son and Blacksod's lighthouse keeper if she was making a mistake. They checked and rechecked and the figures were the same both times. Flavin is recorded telling officials at the Ireland's Eye Magazine "we were happy enough." Word spread and that same day Eisenhower and his advisers meeting at their base in England were advised by James Stagg, a British military meteorologist that based on Ms. Flavin's recordings bad weather was expected. He advised Eisenhower to postpone the invasion by one day and General Eisenhower agreed and June 5th saw rough seas, high winds and thick cloud cover. As a result many commentators, including John Ross, the author of "Forecast for D-Day: And the" 2014 Weatherman Behind Ike's Great Gamble" have argued that the invasion could have failed it occurred that day. Ironically Ms. Flavin's reports indicated not only that June 5th would be disastrous, but also the weather on June 6th would be just good enough.

Eisenhower ordered an invasion in which he proclaimed, "we will accept nothing less than full victory."By noon on the 6th, skies cleared and while the Allies endured thousands of casualties, they won a European beach-head. In a RTE Documentary Joe Cattini, a British D-Day. veteran declared: "We owe a lot to Maureen of the west of Ireland who invaded France on D-Day, because if it were not for her reading of the weather we would have perished in the storms.

N.B. Maureen Flavin was born June 3, 1923 in the village of Knockanure, Ireland where she grew up. Her parents, Michael and Mary Flavin ran a general store. She married Mr. Sweeney, the lighthouse keeper in 1946 and when his mother, the postmistress, died, Ms. Sweeney succeeded her in the job. She first heard about the significance of her weather forecast in 1956. She gained wider publicity during D-Day's 50th anniversary, when the meteorologist Brendan McWilliams wrote about the episode in the Irish Times. In interviews Flavin marveled at the contrast between the immense forces in need of a weather forecast and the small world of the Blacksod Point Post Office? "There they were with thousands of air craft and they could'nt tolerate "low cloud," she said on Irish Public Radio in 2006. "We're delighted we put them on the right road. We eventually had the final say." ESTELLESANLEY@AOL.COM

A New Year Dawns with an immediate shout out to Irish women who survived the notorious Magdalene asylums and especially to the millions of young ones discovering they were pregnant and immediately bailed out of their homes by disgusted embarrassed families who shipped them away to homes for wayward girls. One could say these girls were not wayward. Maybe they liked sex, or were raped by an uncle or the altar boy down the street, or not unheard of, by the parish priest. Ironically the clergy, nuns, priests, and bishops oversaw the running of these dens of iniquity where I find it interesting that the impregnating males, the big guys or the fella who did the deed in the darkness of a country lane were never named and got off scott free, eager and willing to seek other targets. A shivering thought but not unheard off. May I remind the reader it was only a few years ago when it was revealed that Ireland had the largest number of sexually abused boys and Another reminder that stings when the current Pope visited the Emerald Isle a few years ago he seemed stunned upon hearing that statistic. Hint, His Holiness should have looked at his own clergy across the world.

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Congratulations to Colton Birchmeier, Cooper Kranenburg and Jett Becker for being selected to play in the 2023-2024 NIHL All Star Game #allstarhockey #nihl #irishrovers



2023 Quilt Raffle Winner

In December, just after the Christmas Bazaar, the winning ticket for the 2023 raffle quilt was drawn. The lucky winner is Tara Tidwell Cullen, who is delighted, especially because she says she has never won anything before. This lovely quilt, a queen sized item, is called "Diamonds in the Rough."

as a fundraiser for the Center. Tickets are sold at major events through the year (St. Patrick's Day, IBAM and the Christmas Bazaar) and are available online as well. Look for the 2024 raffle quilt, an Irish Chain pattern, to debut in March at the St. Patrick's Day celebration.

Each year, the Nimble Thimbles, a sewing and quilting group that meets weekly at the Irish American Heritage Center, makes a quilt to raffle



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Join the Irish Fellowship Club at the Annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner Friday, March 15

The Irish Fellowship Club of Chicago will host the Annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner on Friday, March 15 at the Hilton Chicago. The Dinner will be chaired by IFC Board members Devon Bruce, Partner at Power Rogers LLP, and Pat Clair. The Dinner will begin with cocktails at 6pm and dinner at 7:30pm. Dancing to Rich Daniels and the City Lights Orchestra and a special presentation by the O'Hara School of Irish Dance will follow.

Co-chair Patrick Clair comments, "Our sponsors and table buyers are important to our success. We invite all of our members and friends to join with us to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and support scholarships for Catholic High Schools and Irish cultural organizations through the Irish Fellowship Club Foundation." Sponsorships are available up to \$10,000 and tables are \$2250. Guests are asked to visit the Irish Fellowship Club website www.irishfellowshipclub.com to purchase tickets, tables and sponsorships.



Co-chair Patrick Clair



Co-chair Devon Bruce

March 15 will be a night to celebrate our Irish heritage and raise funds to support education and cultural organizations through the Irish Fellowship Club Foundation." Says Co-chair Devon Bruce, "The Irish Fellowship Club's annual St. Patrick's Day Dinner is a great start to the civic celebration of St. Patrick's Day in Chicago. We are delighted to honor our own former President, Peter O'Brien as the Grand Marshal and Patrick Kennedy and the Kennedy Forum as the Guest of Honor of the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

The Club will continue its celebration at the 2024 St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 16. The theme of this year's parade is Mental Health is Essential. Sponsored by Plumbers Union Local 130UA, the Parade Committee is led by General Chairman and IFC President Jim Coyne.

The Dinner will also recognize the leadership of Chairman Bob Flood of Flood Brothers. Says Executive Director Kathy Taylor, "It has been a pleasure to work with Bob over the past two years. He has brought new ideas and sponsors to the events and dedicated much of his time to working with our Catholic High Schools. We are grateful for his leadership."

Says Club President Jim Coyne, "I am grateful to Devon Bruce and Pat Clair for their leadership of this kick-off for the St. Patrick's Day Weekend in Chicago. The Dinner is an opportunity for Irish Fellowship Club members and guests to celebrate our heritage and raise important funds for our Foundation to support Catholic education in the Chicagoland area and Irish cultural organizations."

To provide sponsorships or buy tables or tickets, please visit the Irish Fellowship Club website at www.irishfellowshipclub.com or contact Executive Director, Kathy Taylor at irishfellowshipclub@gmail.com.



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The Inn in Goundhog Day is a Treat!

Written and photographed
by Dan McLoughlin

Small town America is the subject of, or at least the setting of so many films and TV shows, and a grand Victorian home is not out of place in that setting. Wrap-around porches surrounded by hydrangeas and white picket fences are the makings of many dreams and romantic comedies are very often found in that setting. But not often can you lose yourself in the dream, take a trip back to small town America and relive the scenes of a favorite movie at the same time, in person.

The Cherry Tree Inn is the one place where it all comes together in the small town of Woodstock, Illinois. Imagine yourself in the classic comedy, Groundhog Day, as you walk around the unique bedrooms and antique filled living room and dining room so familiar to any true fans of the movie.

My wife Pat and I are fans of the movie and were fortunate to have won the IBAM raffle for two nights at the Cherry Tree B&B. We've seen the movie more than a few times but had no idea the home in the movie was a B&B now. We made our reservations and were looking forward to



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a quiet weekend get-a-way in a quaint setting. Exactly two weeks to Groundhog Day and with some fresh snow in the morning and freezing temperatures. You can't, not ask yourself, what the little furry weather forecaster is going to predict.

Lori and George Miarecki are the owners and gracious hosts of Cherry Tree B & B and it was Lori that first met us. Her enthusiasm for the historic home and movie set is obvious as she gave us a tour of the home and showed us to our room. The Magnolia Suite. A spacious room with the same view Bill Murray had every morning, from a bay window looking out over the street leading up to the home. But it's her friendly, detail filled stories of the homes history and early occupants that leaves you with the sense you've been here before. Never-the-less, I was a little hesitant to set the alarm for 6AM, although I do like the song "I Got You Babe." Lori and George love hosting people from all over the world and are especially proud of the large number of guests that are repeat visitors. But talk to Lori for even a short time and you will learn how much she knows about gardening and cooking and how much she enjoys sharing that knowledge and her skills with her guests. But both agree that the ability to create a place for guests to relax and enjoy the combination of modern conveniences with a taste of the romance of the past is their main motivation and enjoyment for running a B & B.

I will add that Bill Murray made a huge mistake in the movie. He never stayed for the breakfast part of the B & B. Lori's passion for cooking is to the benefit of all who visit. And after breakfast the town square with shops and restaurants is a short walk as is a large antique mall. But a detailed flyer with a walking tour of fifteen points of interest from "Ground Hog Day" makes the movie come to life. The entire experience from the atmosphere of the home, the hospitality, the walkable town square and quiet get-a-way is an experience everyone should enjoy. It's now noon on Sunday and Chance of departure 80%. Chance of coming back 100%. Again and again and again! 344 Fremont St, Woodstock, IL 60098

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About Woodstock, Illinois

Quaint brick streets and period lighting surround the lovely Park in the Square of downtown Woodstock, where generations of families have gathered to enjoy parades and ceremonies, art fairs and farmer's markets, and summer City Band concerts going back 130 years.

Woodstock was founded in 1844 as Centerville, located in the exact center of McHenry County and designated as the seat of county government. In 1845, the name was changed to Woodstock, honoring the hometown of settlers from Vermont. The town was incorporated in 1852, and became a City in 1873.

In the mid-1800's, the Chicago & Northwestern railroad arrived, giving local farmers access to large Chicago markets for their cattle, grain and pickles, and allowing Woodstock to attract the Borden Dairy plant, one of the world's largest at that time.

The early 1900's brought both Emerson and Oliver Typewriter companies to town, and by 1922, nearly half the world's typewriters were made in Woodstock.

Early buildings were made of wood and the oldest were largely destroyed during numerous fires. Two majestic focal points of Victorian architecture remain active anchors to the Woodstock Square Historic

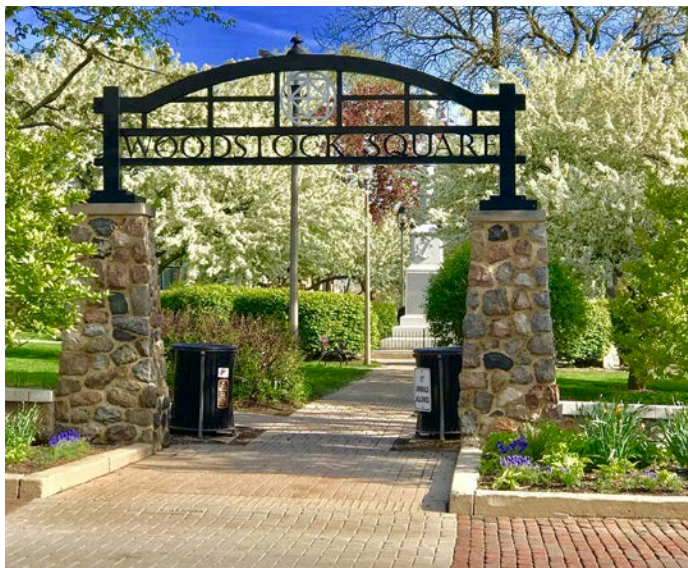
District: the 1857 Old McHenry County Courthouse and the 1889 Woodstock Opera House. Both buildings are owned and operated by the City of Woodstock and reflect the City's continuing dedication to historic preservation, arts and culture.

The Woodstock Opera House was originally built as the City Hall, Library, Auditorium, and Fire Department. Over several decades, virtually every aspect of the "Gothic" style limestone, brick and

terra cotta building has been lovingly restored to its original features. A favorite venue for performers nationwide, the Opera House presents a year-round schedule of professional theater, dance, music concerts and art exhibitions, attracting thousands of visitors annually to enjoy Woodstock's unique downtown shops and cafes.

Legendary actor, director and playwright Orson Welles spent his formative years at

Woodstock's Todd School for Boys and performed his first play on the Opera House stage, now named in his honor. The Woodstock Players, summer stock theater at the Opera House, launched the careers of acting legend Paul Newman and many others. Woodstock was "home" to the world's greatest crime fighter, Dick Tracy, as his creator Chester Gould lived here for 50 years, commuting to Chicago six days a week to



The Magnolia Suite

work on the beloved cartoon strip. The town starred as Punxsutawney, PA, as the main filming site for the Bill Murray hit movie, Groundhog Day, and Woodstock's Classic Cinemas movie theater's main screen has been plaqued as the Harold Ramis Auditorium, reflecting the late director's affection for his time working in Woodstock.

Other notable achievements reflecting Woodstock's growing renown as a historical attraction include being one of a Dozen Distinctive Destinations by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2007, and being named a Preserve America Community by the White House in 2014.

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The Golden Globes were an underwhelming affair, at least in terms of the rather lackluster host, and they featured few moments of real comedy or controversy - and such things are virtually expected at the event, which is one of the few during the long awards season to liberally serve alcohol.

The awards were split rather evenly in the television and movie arenas, though there was a clear winner in the Barbie versus Oppenheimer rematch. Barbie might have won the battle of the box office, but at the Globes it was

Original Score as well, though the highlight might have been its win as Best Drama.

Barbie's duo successes were for the Original Song, "What Was I Made For?" by Billie Eilish, and that can be taken as an Irish success too, as she has Irish and Scottish ancestry, as does more obviously her older brother and collaborator, Finneas O'Connell.

Barbie also won in the new category Cinematic and Box Office Achievement, which aimed to give more recognition to movies popular with the public (and



Cork-born Cillian Murphy won for Best Actor in a Drama Motion Picture, in his portrayal of atomic bomb inventor J. Robert Oppenheimer

the epic story about the creator of the atomic bomb that came out on top.

Barbie only went home with two wins out of its nine nominations, whereas Oppenheimer had an armful, taking away five of its possible eight - and they were big ones, too.

Cork-born Cillian Murphy won for Best Actor in a Drama Motion Picture, and Christopher Nolan won too for Best Director. Robert Downey Jr snagged best Supporting Actor, and it won Best

with a haul of close to \$1.5bn, it really should have had this in the bag!).

Sadly, young Dubliner Barry Keoghan lost out in his Supporting category for his role in movie Saltburn, though he was in good company: Meryl Streep, nominated for Best Supporting Actress in television series Only Murders in the Building lost at the 33rd time of nomination asking for her (can you imagine how crowded her shelves already are?)

Whether these awards will be an accurate predictor of the Oscars is hard to say, as there are so many other ceremonies to come over the next few weeks, but right now it looks like the smart money might be on Oppenheimer.

Moving into streaming, and just available to watch on Netflix is Lift, an action comedy starring Kevin Hart that was shot mostly on location in the North of Ireland.

The story is about master thief Cyrus (played by Hart) who is wooed by his ex-girlfriend Abby (Gugu Mbatha-Raw) and the FBI to pull off an impossible heist with his international crew on a 777-passenger flight flying from London to Zurich.

Directed by F. Gary Gray, it was filmed in Harbour Studios in Belfast, and at many locations across the country including Ulster University, the Titanic Hotel, the famous Crown Liquor Saloon, Castleward Estate, Whitehead Railway Station and Ardglass Harbour.

Hart performed a number of stand-up comedy gigs while he was in town - some of them unannounced - and stars here alongside Sam Worthington, Vincent D'Onofrio and Jean Reno.

Finally, you may also have seen that Mickey and Minnie Mouse (at least the versions that featured in the earliest cartoon "Steamboat Willie") have gone into the public domain, and so many

might consider Walt's life to be the quintessential American story, but few know that he was in fact very connected to his Irish roots.

The Disney name was quite common on the island from the 1600s to the 1800s, and family history is linked most strongly to Kilkenny.

There were roots too in France and England; the French "D'Isigny" name was anglicized to Disney on an 11th century move to England, and in the 1600s Walt's direct ancestors went west to Kilkenny, where they remained for 200 years.

Walt's paternal grandparents Mary and Kepple Elias Disney emigrated to North America as children, and their eldest son Elias would be the father of Walt and Roy, the co-founders of the Walt Disney Company.

Though Walt was born in Chicago, he and his brother both grew up hearing tales of the old country noted Sigman-Lowery, and they proved to be a lasting influence, as Walt visited Ireland several times in the 1940s and 1950s, researching for the movie Darby O'Gill and the Little People.

The movie premiered in Dublin in 1959, and on that trip Walt and his wife bought each other traditional Claddagh rings, which he wore for the rest of his life.

Phil Coulter in Concert February 10



Phil Coulter and his wife, Geraldine

Phil Coulter was born in Derry, Northern Ireland where his father was one of a minority of Catholic policemen in the Royal Ulster Constabulary. His mother was from Belfast. He was the fourth child with two older brothers and a sister and one younger sister, each born with a year's difference between them, in a two-up two-down terraced house.

One of Coulter's most popular songs, "The Town I Loved So Well", deals with the embattled city of his youth, filled with "that damned barbed wire" during the Troubles.

Coulter has amassed 23 platinum discs, 39 gold discs, 52 silver discs, two Grand Prix Eurovision awards; five Ivor Novello Awards, which includes Songwriter of the Year; three American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers awards; a Grammy

Nomination; a Meteor Award, a National Entertainment Award and a Rose d'or d'Antibes. He is one of the biggest record sellers in the island of Ireland.

Coulter married Geraldine Brannigan at Wicklow registry office in 1998, witnessed by their six children, Danielle, Dominique, Alexandra, Daragh, Ryan and Georgina. The two have co-performers ever since.

Tickets on sale now! The Irish American Heritage Center and Irish American News have teamed to bring Mr Coulter to Chicago in February. One ticket holder will win a week's Cruise in 2024 with Phil Coulter. Drawing will take place at the concert Feb. 10 The Irish American Heritage Center 4626 N Knox Ave Chicago IL 60630 Get Tickets at:

<https://irish-american.org/event/an-evening-with-phil-coulter/> or Call Cliff 312.498.1337

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Counties of Ireland

by Tom Butler



County Derry

This month I will review Co. Derry. It is one of the six counties in Northern Ireland. (Tuaisceart Éireann) Derry has the only surviving walled city & the finest in Europe. Walled cities were built during the medieval times of course to protect people during invasions. Other famous European countries that have some walls still standing include Poland, Spain, Germany and Italy. There is a Derry, Oregon and Derry Pennsylvania.

Celtic Park is the stadium in Derry where the Gaelic games are played. In Dublin it is called Croke Park. In Kilkenny where I'm from it's called Nowlan Park.

The river Foyle is the most famous river in Derry, it's roughly 20 miles long. About a decade ago they built a bridge over the Foyle, called The Peace Bridge. We all wish for Peace on Earth. We need quiet and harmony in Ireland, Israel, Ukraine, etc... The very unfortunate "Bloody Sunday" massacre happened in Derry in 1972. (14 deaths, 13 injured)

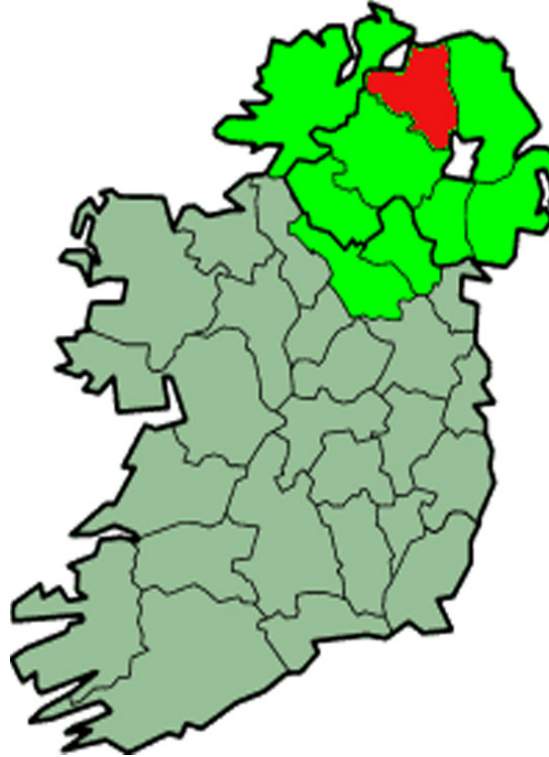
Derry has a few animal sanctuaries. In case you are planning a trip to Ireland, in the near future, there is always something interesting to see or do. The oldest independent department store is in Derry, named Austins, unfortunately it closed about five years ago.

There are many notable people from Derry that I'd like to include & give a short background: John Hume, Phil Coulter, Seamus Heany & Roma Downey. Hume was a Politician; he was leader of the Democratic Labor party. He won the Nobel peace prize. R.i.p. Coulter is a musician & record producer. Well known for the song, "The Town I loved so well".

Heaney was a poet and playwright, he also taught at Harvard. R.i.p. And finally we have the Roma Downey she is an actress and author of several books.

I will end with this story of purpose. Seven angels were sitting around in a circle in the heavens. Gathered around the heavenly fire, they were discussing what would be their purpose be when they go down to

Earth. "I would become a doctor," said one. "I will cure diseases and help the sick." "I would become a composer," said another. "I will create musical compositions that will bring tears of joy to all those who are dispirited." "I will become a politician". I will create structures of governance that are fair and give support to all people." said another. "I will become an inventor. I will create new products that bring more comfort and ease to everyone." "I will become an engineer. I want to help the inventor and make his inventions a reality." "I will become an artist. I will create paintings of all the beauty that I see on the Earth." said the sixth angel. There



were no words coming out of the mouth of the seventh angel. He was completely silent. Everyone looked at the seventh angel who was just

sitting there quietly. "I don't know what I want," said the seventh angel in despair. At that moment, the light of God appeared among the seven angels. God looked into his seventh angels and said..."My angel, you must have a purpose to go down to Earth. You must know what you want. If you don't know what you want, I won't know what to give to you." "Oh, dear God, in that case, I would like to become a writer. I will write stories about God and angels. I will bring all the light that I have seen in heaven down to Earth." God was pleased. The angels were satisfied. One of the angels broke the silence and asked..."Almighty God, we have all shared our own purpose for life. But what about you God? What is your purpose?" "My purpose is to make all of your goals a reality."

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