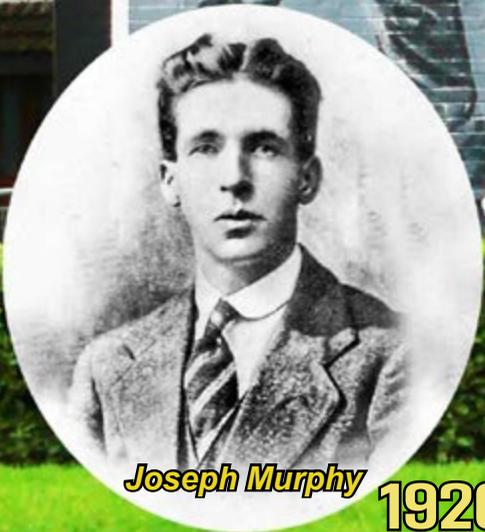




A mural on a building in Co. Derry depicting a mortally wounded teenager, Jackie Duddy, shot by British troops on Bloody Sunday, January 30, 1972



Joseph Murphy

1920 – American/Irish Patriot Joe Murphy died after 76 days on Hunger Strike in Cork Jail

Story by Jim Hegarty page 20

Irish American Hall of Fame Gala April 25 page 46

Tom O’Gorman Column, page 14

110 Year Anniversary of Easter Rising April 24, 1916



Thomas G. Mulvey M.S., P.T., M.B.A.

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At Berlinale Everybody Digs Bill Evans but not Politics

An Irish-produced film, *Everyone Digs Bill Evans*, shot in succulent monochrome and set between New York and Florida, took the Silver Bear for Best Director at the Berlin Film Festival (Berlinale) in February. The film is a portrait of jazz icon Bill Evans. To my eye, the locations were perfectly recreated and captured so convincingly that only after the premiere did I discover that the film had been shot entirely in West Cork. It was a wholly deserving winner. Yet, the festival was overshadowed by controversies that revealed a harsh truth: at Berlinale, everybody may dig Bill Evans, but not politics.

The problems began early, when independent German journalist Tilo Jung asked the festival jury on February 12th about the German government's 'selective human rights' approach to Gaza in contrast to its support for Ukraine. Polish producer and jury member Ewa Puszczynska replied that the question was unfair. Then Jury President Wim Wenders added: 'We have to stay out of politics. We are the counterweight of politics, the opposite of politics, we have to do the work of people—not the work of politicians...Movies can change the world, not in a political way...No movie has really changed any politician's idea'.

View From Ireland

By Maurice Fitzpatrick



itself a political attitude'. For all the beauty of Wenders' films—*Alice in the Cities*, *Paris, Texas*, *Perfect Days*—they do not overtly engage with politics. Somewhere along the way, Wenders seems to have convinced himself that this is the only way to make films.

Unwittingly, Wenders' political innocence belies a political puritanism that the German government has been eager to defend. The logic of that position, enforced by influential figures, ends in a clampdown on dissent: when political filmmaking is discouraged, it affects both the prospects of such films being made and their ability to reach audiences.

Berlinale director Tricia Tuttle could have differentiated herself and the festival from Wenders' position, and unambiguously affirmed the validity of politically engaged filmmaking. Instead, on February 14th, she issued a statement laden with vague generalities: 'There are many different kinds of art, and many different ways of being political. Individual approaches vary greatly. People have called for free speech at the Berlinale'. She added that 'in a media environment dominated by crisis, there is less oxygen left for serious conversation about film or culture at all'. Yet surely it is the political environment, rather than the media environment, that is dominated by crises? And is the suggestion that crises hinder serious cultural discourse not merely a variant of Wenders' claim?

The defining political battle of our time is a battle of wills. Autocracies seek to break the will of resisters; resisters must steel their resolve against them. That has involved risking and giving up lives. For example, although the estimates vary widely, consider the approximately 30,000 murdered by the Iranian regime in January, 75,000 people murdered by the IDF in Gaza and the almost half a million who have been killed since Putin's illegal invasion in Ukraine—to pick three sickening examples. Filmmakers play a crucial role in bringing to light the threats to democracy and to humanity. This backdrop explains the anger at Wenders' comments that filmmakers should stay out of politics.

The festival's tension intensified when the Best First Feature prize went to *Chronicles from the Siege*, directed by Palestinian-Syrian Abdallah Al-Khatib. His speech at the award ceremony, criticising Germany's stance on Gaza, prompted minister Carsten Schneider to walk out. Tuttle was called to meet the government at an extraordinary meeting in response to statements of support for Gaza at an extraordinary meeting. She retained her job but accepted that an advisory board be appointed to the festival and agreed to issue guidelines for political statements on stage. Had she retained her authority in the eyes of the filmmaking community, she could have leveraged it in that humiliating encounter. Now the German government, which leans further right with each passing month, has the stool pigeon it wants at the helm of Berlinale. But they should be wary of the pyrrhic victory.

In the summer of 1947, a group of theatre companies arrived in Edinburgh with a problem: they had not been invited to perform at the Edinburgh International Festival. Rather than return home, they did something brave and novel. They created performances on the margins, giving rise to the Edinburgh Fringe, now the world's largest arts festival. Today, a similar Berlin Fringe could emerge, offering politically independent spaces and reasserting the vitality of artistic freedom. The filmmaker İlker Çatak, who took the top prize, the Golden Bear, at Berlinale this year for his political drama *Yellow Letters*, has declared he would 'never again give a film to the Berlinale' if political interference continues. When official platforms narrow, creativity flows to the margins, which often become the centre of cultural gravity. Berlinale risks forgetting this lesson.

Really? Film histories are replete with works—feature films and investigative documentaries—that probed and corrected miscarriages of justice, challenged oppression and defended the historical record. Berlinale itself has long prided itself on political engagement. Established in 1951 as a geopolitical project of the Cold War, it was a U.S.-driven cultural showcase of the 'Free World', positioning West Berlin as a liberal democratic outpost. These origins became a defining element of the festival's identity. As Dieter Kosslick, director from 2001-2019, stated: 'Berlinale is political by nature'.

Wenders' comments at any festival would have been a travesty; at Berlinale, they undermined the festival's self-image. In 2026, when democratic freedoms are under unprecedented pressure, Berlinale's Jury President urged filmmakers to 'stay out of politics'. Graffiti in Berlin offered this riposte: 'Wim, du Feigling [Wim, you coward]! Film is Political'. The damage from Wenders' statement was immediate. The following day, Indian author Arundhati Roy, invited to present a film based on her work, withdrew in protest, rejecting the stance of the jury and stating that 'history will judge them'.

Among Berlin's film financiers and administrators, a common refrain I heard was that Wenders is entitled to his opinion. True, but now he must own it. That includes confronting the reality that his prescription of what filmmakers should or should not do is itself a political stance. As Orwell observed, 'the opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is

Mother Jones Birthday Celebration 4-26 + Installation of Her Statue at Wacker and Wabash Coming This Year!

Mother Jones is inviting you to her birthday party and she's celebrating more than her birthday!

This is the year that her statue is installed at Wacker and Wabash in Chicago!

Come join the celebration on Sunday, April 26 at 3:00 at the Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox, Chicago!

Enjoy musical entertainment and gathering with friends to celebrate this wonderful Irish woman!



Significant Rise in Passport Applications from Irish Citizens Abroad

New figures reveal significant shifts in Irish passport applications during 2025.

According to new figures obtained by the TG4 current affairs programme 7LÁ from the Department of Foreign Affairs under the Freedom of Information Act show that applications from Irish citizens living outside the State jumped by almost

35% from 200,609 to 270,077 (+69,468) in 2025.

Overall passport applications fell by 12% last year from 1,061,629 to 933,121 (-128,508) in 2025.

Passport applications made by citizens not residing in Ireland.

2025: 270,077 applications (almost 70,000 more than 2024 when 200,609 applied.

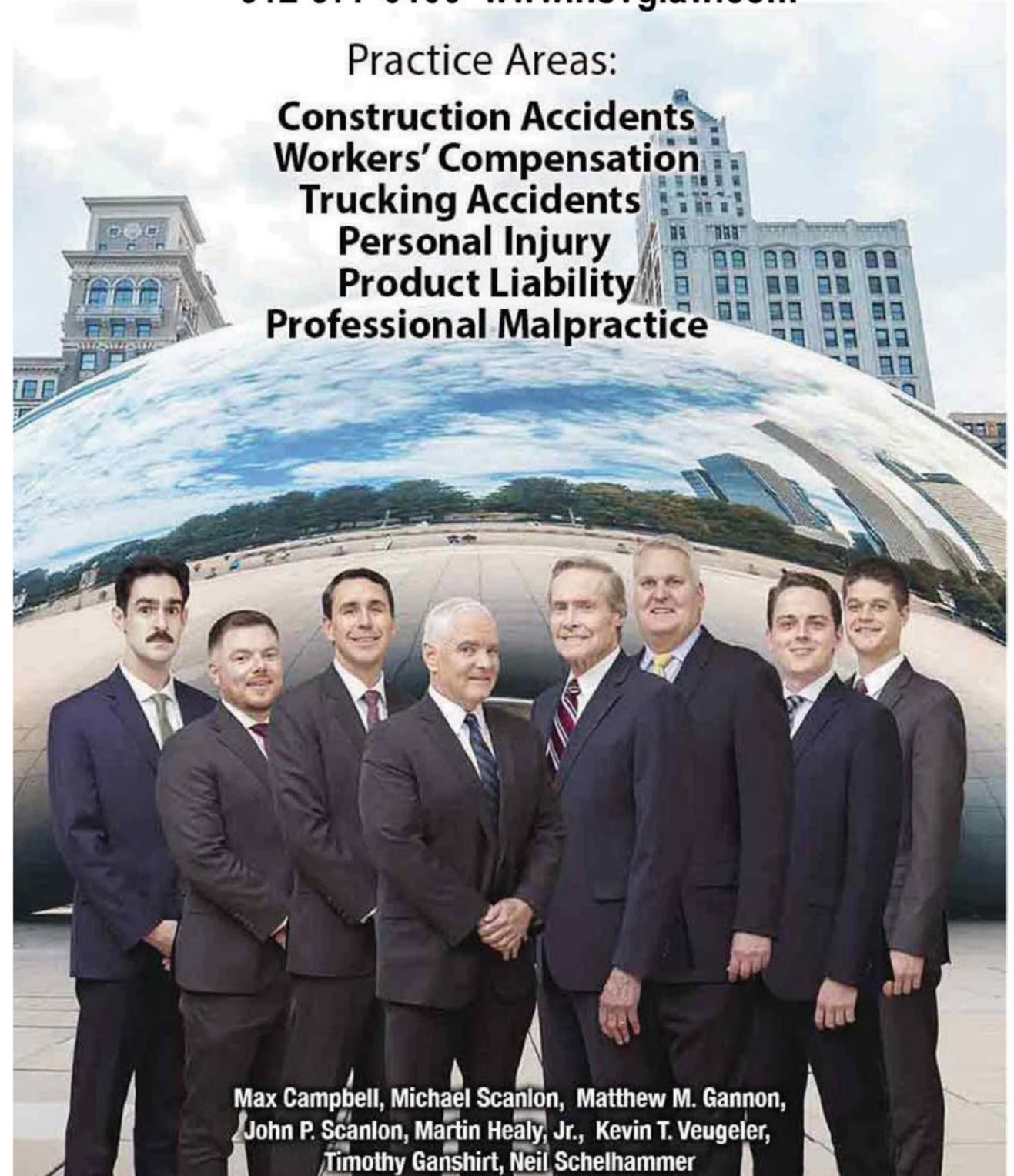


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Amendment Nine, Etcetera

The Founding Fathers, despite their flaws, did have a remarkable sense of foresight. The Ninth Amendment epitomizes this fact by the very notion that it was written for the future, and was meant to be all-encompassing:

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creatures, and that they might have not written down a fully comprehensive list of rights that ought to be protected by the Constitution.

Ironically, the fact that the Ninth Amendment doesn't explicitly cite these other rights often leaves the judiciary reluctant to expand protections to new rights. Instead, the Courts tend to deem the issues "political questions" and punt them to Congress to sort out (or not sort out).

There are few notable exceptions, but the most well-known one would be *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), which struck down a law in Connecticut that prohibited married couples from using birth control. The Supreme Court ruled that the law violated an

President Connolly on Dolores Keane

"It is with profound sadness that I learned of the death of Dolores Keane. She was one of the great voices of this island, and of the world.

Shaped from childhood by the tradition of her aunts Rita and Sarah, she carried that forward with fierce, joyful intelligence, and she made it new.

With De Dannan, in her solo work, on *A Woman's Heart*, and in recordings that have become part of the fabric of Irish life, she showed what it means to bring the full weight of yourself to a song.

Nanci Griffith once said she had a sacred voice. She was right. But what made it sacred was her honesty. She gave everything, without pretence.



My deepest condolences go to her son Joseph, her daughter Tara, her brother Seán, her sister Theresa, and to the wider Keane family. To all who loved her and were moved by her, and we are many, I say simply:

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam dilis."

American's fundamental "right to privacy," and cited the Ninth Amendment (in addition to parts of several other amendments) in their decision.

However, this new "right to privacy" was cited again in a much more controversial case, *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and was tied to the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause instead of the Ninth Amendment. Prior to the modern era, however, the Ninth Amendment was basically ignored by the federal judiciary.

The Supreme Court specifically has exercised restraint in invoking the Ninth Amendment (aside from *Griswold* and a couple other cases) because justices have traditionally viewed that the law violated an

privileges as being a job specifically delegated to Congress by the Constitution.



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Founders Bob and Jean Burns
Publishers Cliff and Cathy Carlson
Creative/Web Director Cathy Carlson
Ad Sales / Marketing Cliff Carlson
Contributing Writers:

Ryenne Gallagher Johnson
Irish Correspondent Grainne McCool
COLUMNS AND REVIEWS

An Irish Complex Thomas O'Gorman
Books in Review Michael Corrigan
Books in Review Sabina Clarke
Books & More Terrence Kenneally
Catholic Charities
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Murder of Michael Collins at Heritage Center April 14

After his sellout 2025 US Tour with 'I Can't Believe It's Not Ireland', Paddy Cullivan returns for ONE NIGHT ONLY to the Mayfair Theatre Chicago with his epic one-man murder-mystery masterpiece 'The Murder of Michael Collins'.



Tickets at <https://Irish-American.org> (click event calendar)

TUES. 4-4 Mayfair Theatre
4626 N Knox Ave., Chicago IL
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groundbreaking research, this immersive audio-visual performance challenges truth buried? From political intrigue to shocking unanswered questions, this fast-paced journey explores hidden secrets, conflicting accounts, and the long shadow cast by Collins' assassination. Part historical deep dive, part live performance spectacle, The Murder of Michael Collins is as riveting as any modern true-crime story – and just as transformative. Expect surprises, laughter, music, and revelations that will forever change how you view Irish history.

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Irish-American Fighter Micah Ashby Headlines Global Internationals in San Antonio on June 20th

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an Irishman he likes to fight - so much he likes to lose cause even if you win the fight you'll end up black and blue an Irishman can take a punch and still come back for more he won't give up he'll never quit till he can't get off the floor an Irishman will drink with friends or folks that he doesn't know he'll sing and dance all night long till he's passed out cold with bully boys or winny souls, he'll never share a brew but he'll cheer the man who does not run no matter win or lose he'll weave and dodge with chiseled fists as if they're made of stone and no matter if you win or lose he'll gladly walk you home'

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evening's main event.

The Global Internationals showcases multiple combat disciplines and brings together athletes representing their respective nations in pursuit of world titles.

Ashby, a dual citizen of the United States and Ireland, will represent Ireland at the summer event. In 2025, he represented the Emerald Isle at the Martial Arts World Games, where he won the Gold Medal in kickboxing.

Ashby is also the first athlete in history to complete the Combat Sports Grand Slam—winning championships in a striking art, a grappling art, mixed martial arts, and professional wrestling. In recognition of his accomplishments, he was inducted into the Martial Arts Hall of Fame in 2022. For info contact: TRUEFORCETKD@GMAIL.COM



#TeamHinshaw partner Matt Walsh was among the Irish and US business leaders who rang the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange (@nyse) celebration of Ireland Day 2026.
The ceremony highlighted the strength of the economic and professional partnerships between Ireland and the United States that support investment, innovation, and long-term collaboration across the Atlantic.
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Spring is in the air or at least the calendar indicates it is. As I am writing this, the outside temperature is 30 degrees and it is snowing, a far cry from the 70-degree temperatures of a few days ago. Hopefully the weather is nicer in Ireland as the provincial hurling championships are set to begin the weekend of April 18.

I am in no way, shape or form an oddsmaker but it appears that the early favorites to win the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship are Cork, Limerick, and Tipperary with Kilkenny given an outside chance. A lot can happen between the start of the campaign and the championship match on July 19, but it should be an action-packed season with every match equally important to the contenders for Liam MacCarthy. Highlight

that July date in your calendar as it is a sport's lovers dream with the World Cup Final and the final round of the Open Championship being contested at Royal Birkdale on that same date. I don't know if it was poor planning, great planning or just the luck of the draw to have 3 major championships being played on the same day. Whatever the reason, I love it, and it will certainly be tuning in to all 3!

Locally, Michael Cusack's are gearing up for another exciting season as they try to match the tremendous success they enjoyed in 2025. As the premier hurling club in the Chicago area, the Cusack's always have a target on their back, but they have repeatedly shown that they are up to the challenge.

On the women's side I will be keeping a keen eye on St. Mary's Camogie Chicago as they begin the season as the reigning North American Intermediate champions. It had been 12 long years since their last championship when St. Mary's hoisted the cup last year in Philadelphia, but I would be willing to bet that they are not going to go a dry spell anything like 12 years again.

If hurling and camogie are not your cup of tea, we have plenty of other sporting events that should be able to entertain you as spring moves into summer.

Baseball season will be in full swing. The Cubs should be a playoff team but like other National League contenders they will have a hard time getting by the Dodgers to make it into the World Series. The South-Siders are still miles away from being a playoff team so those fans can expect a lot of losses, but I am confident that this is the year that things start to turn around. Who knows, maybe they catch lightning in

a bottle and make some waves in the American League, but I just don't see that happening with their lineup.

My advice, as always, is to find some diversion from the nonsense that is going on in our government. As of today, we are still at war with Iran and although they say it will be ending soon, who really knows? In my opinion our leadership is a bunch of buffoons who only care about

themselves and have ZERO concern for the constituents they swore to represent. It is a very sad situation going on in Washington and across the world and hopefully, some of our representatives will wake up one day and decide to do the job they were elected to do instead of being cowards. It's not likely to happen because our politicians have taken lying to a world cup level, but one can hope, right?

Beyond the Basket: Nourishing Families With More Than Groceries

By Jessica Martinez, RD, LDN

WIC (Women, Infants, and Children): A federal nutrition program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Illinois Department of Human Services. 22,000+ neighbors served each month: Families across Chicago turn to WIC Grocery Stores and the WIC Mobile Market for trusted nutrition support close to home.

•More than groceries: Free cooking classes, fresh produce, and hands-on guidance help parents build confidence and healthier routines.

•Donor-supported care: A visit for groceries can also connect families to broader wrap-around services that strengthen the whole household.

Each month, more than 22,000 people visit our 10 WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) grocery stores, managed by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago, in Roseland, South Chicago, Auburn Gresham, Englewood, Gage Park, Little Village, Douglas Park, Austin, Logan Square, and Belmont Cragin. Our WIC Mobile Market makes shopping even easier by traveling directly to multiple Chicago neighborhoods.

For many families, that visit comes during one of the most demanding seasons of life. Parents are balancing rising costs, childcare,

transportation, and the daily pressure of caring for their children. Because of donor support, we are able to offer wrap-around services that provide families with practical help, encouragement, and care that extends well beyond their immediate need for food.

More Than Groceries

We provide both virtual and in-person cooking classes throughout the year to WIC participants at no cost to them. We also purchase fresh produce from local farmers from July through September and provide a prepackaged bundle to each of our shoppers at no additional cost. We want to support participants holistically beyond supplying the essential WIC benefits.

During one of our cooking classes, we had a very young mom, nervous to volunteer to help prep the recipe, but was encouraged by the group to step in. Our amazing nutrition associate, Dream, took her hand into her hand and guided her through the steps, until she eventually had the confidence to prep and chop alone. Seeing her confidence grow, even in that short amount of time, is something that always sticks with me. You never know how these small moments of support can affect those we serve.

That support matters because many mothers want

to make healthy choices but need practical tools that fit real life. In our stores, nutrition associates like Dream answer questions, share simple recipes, and offer guidance that helps families feel more confident at home. Donor generosity helps turn nutrition support into something deeper: education, trust, and healthier routines families can carry forward.

Wrap-Around Care That Strengthens Families

At Catholic Charities, we know if our clients seek us out for one need, they may have other needs as well. A parent who comes in for groceries may also need emergency assistance, counseling, case management, or help navigating other serious pressures affecting the household. Because donors make this work possible, families can find comprehensive, wrap-around care that responds to the fuller reality of their lives.

That is what it means to go beyond the basket. We are not only helping meet an immediate need – we are helping build confidence, stability, and hope for families across Chicago. And every act of generosity helps keep that care close to the neighborhoods and families who need it most.

To help families in need, visit www.catholiccharities.net/ give or call (312) 655-7525.

Jessica Martinez is director of WIC nutrition for Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago.



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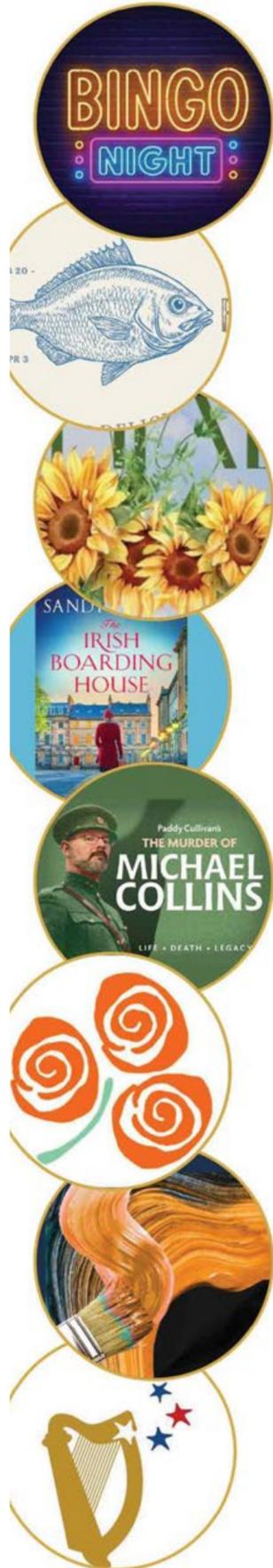
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Fry-Day is at the Irish American Heritage Center! A cozy, family-friendly tradition filled with live music, Irish dancing, and a kids' area to keep little ones happy while you catch up with friends. We recommend purchasing admission online for the best pricing, though tickets will also be available at the door — making it easy to stop by whenever it suits you. It's the perfect spot for community, craic, and a classic fish fry. Bring the whole crew!

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2026 BIENNIAL JURIED SPRING ART EXHIBIT

Selective Public Viewing Dates & Times (Details Online)

An event celebrating incredible local artists, creativity, and community. The exhibit will be open Fridays through April, plus special viewing days during our St. Patrick's Day Festival and Irish American Hall of Fame Cocktail Party, with a Closing Reception on April 26! This year's exhibit was judged by Chicago-area artist Danielle Crilly, whose expressive work draws from family history, old photographs, and memories of her Central Illinois upbringing — capturing beauty, nostalgia, and connection across generations. Come experience an inspiring season of art at the IAHC and support our talented artists — we can't wait to celebrate with you!

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THE GREAT IRISH BOOK CLUB

SATURDAY, APRIL 11 | 2:00 PM

Our April Book Choice: *The Irish Boarding House* by Sandy Taylor

Emotional and deeply moving, *The Irish Boarding House* uncovers long-buried truths about childhood, silence, and resilience. New here? You're warmly invited. We gather for Irish literature, thoughtful conversation, and a good cup of tea every month. All readers are welcome. Bring your book, bring a friend, and we'll bring the tea.

FREE EVENT | IAHC Membership Recommended

SUNDAY MASS & FULL IRISH BREAKFAST

SUNDAY, APRIL 12 | MASS 10:00 AM | FOLLOWED BY IRISH BREAKFAST

Join us for our most popular Sunday tradition! Attending Mass is welcome but not required; breakfast service begins once Mass concludes and pub doors open. RSVP encouraged: purchase online or call 773-282-7035 (ext. 10).

TICKETS \$30 Adults | \$25 Seniors (65+) | \$15 Children (12 & under)

THE MURDER OF MICHAEL COLLINS - THE SHOW

TUESDAY, APRIL 14 | 7:00 PM

Step into one of the greatest mysteries in Irish history with acclaimed historical entertainer Paddy Cullivan as he brings the dramatic final days of Michael Collins to life. Through a gripping blend of storytelling, live music, rare imagery, and groundbreaking research, this immersive audio-visual performance challenges everything you thought you knew about Ireland's revolutionary hero.

TICKETS \$25 General Admission | \$35 Priority Seating

THE 2026 CHICAGO ROSE OF TRALEE SELECTION

SUNDAY, APRIL 19 | 5:00 PM

The 2026 Chicago Rose of Tralee Selection will take place at the Irish American Heritage Center, honoring a proud tradition that celebrates Irish heritage, community, and connection. This special event selects a young woman of Irish ancestry to represent Chicago at the internationally renowned Rose of Tralee Festival in Ireland. We warmly encourage family, friends, and supporters to join us for this special evening to celebrate the Chicago Rose tradition. The program will feature a festive atmosphere with a cash bar.

TICKETS TBA (Check our Website for Updates)

WATERCOLOR SPRING CLASS SERIES

APRIL 23 - MAY 23 | VARIED DATES/TIMES BASED ON CHOSEN SERIES

Join us this spring for a hands-on watercolor painting class series led by Kathy Kelly. Two time options are available to accommodate different schedules — a morning series and an evening series — both following the same curriculum and structure.

TUITION \$135 for the full class series

IRISH AMERICAN HALL OF FAME - 14TH ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

SATURDAY, APRIL 25 | 6:30 P.M. COCKTAIL RECEPTION FOLLOWED BY DINNER AND PROGRAM

Join us as we recognize the 2026 class of outstanding Irish Americans! Visit www.iahof.org to view the 2026 Class of Inductees! The Gala will be hosted in the Erin Ballroom at the IAHC with a Black Tie dress code.

TICKETS Individual & Tables of 10: Please visit our website for more details.

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.

BE A PART OF IT BY BECOMING A MEMBER OR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY! ✨ JOIN AT IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG

“Since stepping into my role as Marketing & Programming Manager at the Irish American Heritage Center, my life has truly transformed in the most meaningful way. Immersing myself in Chicago's Irish and Irish American community has given me a deep sense of connection, purpose, and belonging—it's more than a job, it's become a part of who I am. Every day, I have the privilege of helping create experiences that celebrate culture, bring people together, and keep traditions alive, and that's incredibly fulfilling. I'm especially honored to be the IAHC's sponsoree for the 2026 Chicago Rose of Tralee Selection this April—an event that beautifully reflects everything we stand for: heritage, community, and connection. Being able to support and promote something so meaningful through my role is an extremely special opportunity.” — Madison Casey



IRELAND 2026 RAFFLE

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MEMBERSHIP

Enhance your IAHC membership with options that fit every household and level of support: **Individual/Family** plans start at \$30/\$50 for 1 year or \$50/\$75 for 2 years, and include 10% off at the IAHC Gift Shop (non-sale/non-food items) and food in the Fifth Province, **member-only ticket discounts, voting rights** for the IAHC Board, eligibility to **run for the Board** (members in good standing for 3 of 5 consecutive years), and an **Irish American News** subscription. Step up to **Harper (3 years, \$250)** for all core benefits plus a private tour of the IAHC. Go all-in with **Bard (5 years, \$500)** and receive all core benefits plus a private tour of the IAHC, two tickets to the Christmas Bazaar Breakfast, and an Irish American News subscription. **THIS IS YOUR CENTER—BE A PART OF IT BY BECOMING A MEMBER OR RENEWING TODAY AT IRISH-AMERICAN.ORG.**

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IAHC GIFT SHOP

HOURS | TUESDAY - FRIDAY: 3:00-8:00PM
SATURDAY: 10:00AM-8:00PM

STOP BY THE IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE CENTER GIFT SHOP FOR A WIDE SELECTION OF IRISH FAVORITES—WHETHER YOU'RE CRAVING SWEET TREATS FROM THE GALWAY BAKERS OR SAVORY DELIGHTS FROM WINSTON.

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Father Tom McCarthy Celebrates Pope Leo's Message of Faith, Peace and Unity as Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade

Stop me if you have heard this story before. A local boy from Chicago's South Side attends Catholic schools growing up, earns



his bachelor's degree from Villanova University, enters the Augustinian order to become a priest, and goes on to lead a distinguished career before being honored with one of the highest awards in the world. No, I am not talking about Pope Leo XIV. I am talking about Father Thomas McCarthy, O.S.A. (Order of St. Augustine) whose background so closely resembles that of the newly

elect leader of the Catholic Church. Fr. McCarthy's recent honor did not take him to the Vatican, but it did take him to downtown Chicago on Saturday, March 14, as he was called to serve as the Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

For Fr. McCarthy, his honor as Grand Marshal marked a seminal moment in his personal and professional life, given his Irish background and Chicago roots, which continue to grow in his role as Vocation Director at St. Rita of Cascia High School on the

Southwest Side.

"I'm proud to be half-Irish," Fr. McCarthy shares, noting that his two Irish grandparents, from Killarney and Westport, respectively, met in Chicago and were married at St. Elizabeth's. "I knew my grandfather well and had a wonderful experience with him. He had the beautiful brogue, and we were always celebrating our Irish heritage, especially around St. Patrick's Day. My mother made the best corned beef and cabbage, and we were fixtures at the South Side Irish Parade."

A native Chicagoan, Fr. McCarthy grew up on the Southwest Side, attending St. Adrian School in Marquette Park before enrolling at St. Rita, the Catholic high school that has been operated by the Order of St. Augustine since its founding in 1905.

When it was time to select a

at Villanova University, where he earned a Bachelor Arts in Communication. After graduating from Villanova, Fr. McCarthy entered the Midwest Province of the Augustinian



Father Tom McCarthy presented Pope Leo XIV with a St. Rita High School shirt during a visit to the Vatican last year. The two have known each other for 35 years.

Order in 1987, and after college, he continued in the Augustinian tradition studying

Union in Chicago and graduated with a Master of Divinity degree.

For Fr. McCarthy, his sense of Irishness - and everything that entails - is intertwined with the critical role that the Irish played in the foundation of the Augustinian Order, of which he has now been a part for the better part of four decades. In 1794, the Augustinians of Ireland sent Reverend John Rosseter, O.S.A., to Philadelphia to establish the Augustinian Catholic presence in the United States. Dublin native Reverend Matthew Carr, O.S.A. would arrive in 1796 and make Philadelphia the center of Augustinian missionary activity, and over a century later, the Augustinians would expand into the Midwest with the

establishment of St. Rita's Cascia Parish and St. Rita High School in Chicago. After his ordination in 1994, Fr. McCarthy embarked on a whirlwind career of service around the world, which included stops in Michigan, back in Villanova, Ontario, and even Rome, where he ministered as part of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization. Pope Francis named him a Papal Missionary of Mercy in 2018.

The Catholic Church in America, and particularly the Augustinian order, changed forever on May 8, 2025, when the Reverend Robert Prevost, O.S.A. was announced as Pope Leo XIV. Given his close ties with the new pontiff, Fr. McCarthy instantaneously became a popular man, sought-after by media outlets around the world to share his reflections on Pope Leo. After all, the two priests had known each other



Father Tom McCarthy (pictured to the right of Governor JB Pritzker) served as Grand Marshal of the St. Patrick's Day Parade.

for 35 years, and Fr. McCarthy considers the Pope a close friend. It was Pope Leo, then known as Reverend Prevost, who appointed McCarthy as President of St. Rita in 2002.

"I bet that I did fifty interviews before I could come up for air," Fr. McCarthy reflects on that time, and he continues to feel pride and hope in the new papacy.

"I've always had deep respect in the Pope's work as a missionary. All the missionaries from Peru that I met, I've had great admiration for them. When Pope Leo earned his doctorate, he could have taught at any seminary, but he

chose to return to Peru to work among the poorest of the poor. Everything he has accomplished is not a surprise. It's who he is, it's so natural for him."

Last October, when Fr. McCarthy traveled to Rome and met with Pope Leo, he was struck by how little the new pontiff had changed; he was still the same man that Fr. McCarthy remembered.

"He hadn't changed a bit," Fr. McCarthy remembers. "He is such a down-to-earth, holy man in the best sense of the word."

Fr. McCarthy's pride in the new Pope is matched by his pride in the Augustinian Order -

as he says, "as an Augustinian, it's just awesome to have one of our own become the Vicar of Christ on Earth" - and his dedication to the order continues to grow. He was recently elected as Prior Provincial of the Midwest Augustinians, the same position that Pope Leo held from 1999 to 2001. He will formally take on the position in June, and he looks forward to building on the excitement around the order - the "Pope Leo Effect" - to mentor younger friars and "dream big" in serving the Church.

For all of Fr. McCarthy's travels, and for all the impact he has made in his ministry, the recent honor of serving as Parade Grand Marshal was particularly meaningful to him, as a proud Chicagoan of Irish descent. He was not expecting to receive the award when Fr. Scott Donohue of Mercy Home invited him for a luncheon several months ago and introduced him to Jim and Michelle Coyne. However, as soon as he received the invitation, he recalls saying, "I'd be honored. I said yes in honor of my parents and grandparents."

Naturally, the Lenten season is a busy one for Fr. McCarthy, but he still found time to participate in a number of events and activities leading up to St. Patrick's Day, including a pilgrimage to Rome with the Plumbers Union to discuss important labor issues. Among the dignitaries they met on that trip was none other than Pope Leo.

The theme of this year's St. Patrick's Parade was Faith, Peace, and Unity, which was inspired by Pope Leo's first words when he addressed the throngs of people from the Balcony of St. Peter's Basilica following his ascendancy to the papacy: "Peace be with

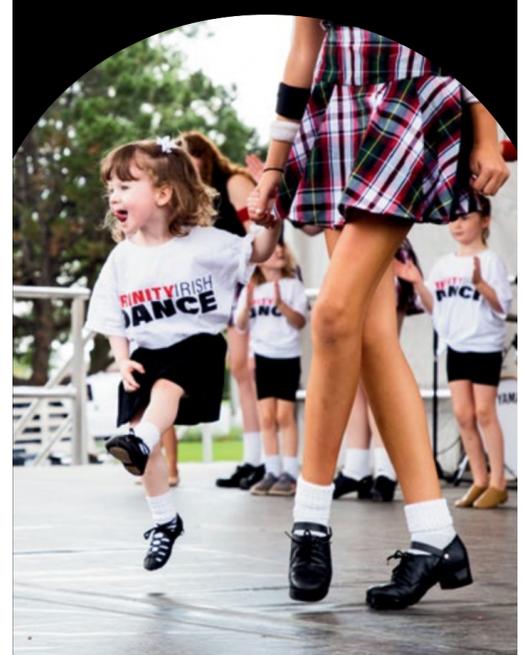
you all."

By marching down the streets of Columbus Drive as the guest of honor at the St. Patrick's Day Parade, Fr. McCarthy not only reinforced this important message. He also celebrated the proud legacy of his ancestors - both his blood relatives from Ireland and Chicago, as well as the generations of Augustinians who, like Fr. McCarthy, dedicated themselves to community life, prayer, and service.

To learn more about the Midwest Augustinians, visit their website at <http://www.midwestaugustinians.org>

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UPCOMING ISSUES IN IRISH AMERICAN NEWS

MAY
Caroleann Gallagher Will be Inducted as the First Irish President of the Women's Bar Assn of Illinois June 11th at the Palmer House



JUNE
Liam O'Neill, 2025 Visual Arts Awardee at iBAM!, Will be Featured in an in depth story by iBAM's President, Josephine Craven



JULY
The Brownes Created the Spinnaker Restaurant in Lanzarote, an Irish Gathering Place in the Canary Islands. Now, the Children Carry on the Tradition



CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

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

A Cháirde,

Thank you! For marching with us in four parades. For dancing or supporting the dancers at three great nights of Ireland on Parade. For celebrating with us on the two special Sundays and enjoying all the bands, singers, dancers and kids activities. For attending our luncheon early in the month, or our two brilliant concerts. For taking a chance on our Aer Lingus / Chicago Gaelic Park raffle. For enjoying live music, camaraderie and meals in the Carraig Pub. And, for being part of the Gaelic Park and greater Chicago Irish community.

April should be a bit easier on our tireless, hardworking staff, but there's still plenty to do. Choose one or all: Easter Egg Hunt; Easter Buffet; Irish Film Night; Simply Elton concert; Annual Irish Singing Workshop; and "Helping Aunt Kitty", by Dearmaid Blehein, presented by the Gaelic Park Players.

The weather is improving. Beer garden season and the Chicago Feis are right around the corner.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Bill O'Sullivan - President of the Board of Directors at Chicago Gaelic Park



WELCOME NEW CPG BOARD MEMBERS
Melissa Mangan
Dr. Christine Lawless
Joe Wholley

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WHEN YOU'RE AT

IRISH FEST
CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

AUGUST 21-23



COUNTRY CONCERTS AT GGP



BILLY GRAY

Sunday, April 12

Billy Gray Music Band is bringing high-energy, foot-stomping country to the Chicago Gaelic Park. It's time for an afternoon packed with killer musicianship, driving rhythms, and all your favorite country hits done the Billy Gray way.



Sunday, May 3rd

The Stephen Smyth Band is one of Ireland's most enduring and dynamic live acts, celebrated for their high-energy performances, outstanding musicianship, and genuine connection to the Irish showband and country tradition.

Led by Stephen Smyth, a veteran performer with over 30 years in the Irish music industry, the band delivers a powerful mix of Irish ballads, country classics, and lively dance favourites that continue to captivate audiences at home and abroad.

CHICAGO GAELIC PARK

6119 W. 147th St. Oak Forest, IL 60452 - (708)687-9323 - ChicagoGaelicPark.com

CGP Event Calendar

Visit chicagogaelicpark.com for more information.

- April 4 - EASTER EGG HUNT
- April 5 - EASTER DINNER
- April 11 - SIMPLY ELTON
- April 12 - MASS & IRISH BREAKFAST
- April 12 - ANNUAL SINGING WORKSHOP
- April 12 - GAELIC PARK BOOK CLUB
- April 12 - BILLY GRAY CONCERT
- April 17 - "HELPING AUNT KITTY" OPENS
- April 27 - "HELPING AUNT KITTY" CLOSES
- May 3 - STEPHEN SMYTH BAND
- May 10 - MASS & IRISH BREAKFAST
- May 23-24 - THE CHICAGO FEIS

JOIN THE CARRAIG REWARDS PROGRAM!

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- \$5 off for ever 100 points
- 3X the points Tues-Thurs
- Free dessert on your birthday



Music at The Carraig

No cover charge for music at The Carraig.

- April 2 - TRAD THURSDAY
- April 3 - KIERAN BYRNE
- April 4 - GERRY HAUGHEY
- April 9 - DAVE ROBLEY
- April 10 - JOE MCSHANE
- April 11 - THE CHANCERS
- April 12 - FIFTY-ONE LINCOLN
- April 17 - THE FABTONES
- April 18 - O'LEARY'S LANTERN
- April 19 - GOING WEST
- April 23 - OPEN MIC NIGHT
- April 24 - EVIN O'RIORDAN
- April 25 - MULLIGAN STEW
- April 26 - JOHN STAUNTON
- April 30 - DECLAN MCSHANE

Gaelic Park Players Presents Spring 2026



The Gaelic Park Players are thrilled to announce the world premier of *Helping Aunt Kitty*. Ticket holders receive 10% off their bill at The Carraig on the day of the performance they attend. We encourage you to make reservations.

Lauren thinks she is not only helping her Aunt Kitty run her shop for the day, but also her romantic life with a phone call. But when you call the wrong number, life can get "deadly" confusing. Join us for the world premiere of this funny Irish comedy set in a small town in County Mayo where death announcements are still given every day.



Saturday, May 23rd & Sunday, May 24th

Register by May 11th at QuickFeis.com. Email Feis@ChicagoGaelicPark.org with questions.



The Carraig Weekly Specials

The Carraig Pub is open five days a week (Tuesday - Sunday)! We feature live music on Friday and Saturday evenings with no cover charge.

Wednesday - BBQ Ribs

Friday - Fish Fry - French Fried Shrimp, Brewer Battered Cod, 1/2 & 1/2, or Fried Chicken served with Fries & Coleslaw

Sunday - Sunday Roast served with Yorkshire pudding, mashed potatoes, vegetables & topped with Chef Moe's homemade gravy.



You can buy a Carraig gift card online!



GAELIC PARK PLANNED GIVING ENDOWMENT

How do we maintain the accomplishments of the Gaelic Park Community and ensure that it will thrive in the future?

Give the gift of Irish Heritage to succeeding generations by contributing today!



Chicago Gaelic Park celebrates, preserves and promotes Irish culture and heritage through artistic, athletic, cultural, educational, and social activities. We provide a welcoming place for all to share in our great Irish American experience.

Examples of ways to give:
Cash Donations
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IRAs
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For more information or to discuss your plans, please contact Michael Bennett - General Manager by phone 708-687-9323 or email endowment@chicagogaelicpark.org.

Planned gifts are made after careful consideration of one's financial situation and charitable goals. It is recommended to consult financial, tax, and/or legal advisors regarding these types of donations.

Preserving and Promoting our Irish Mission:

- Chicago Irish Feis
- Irish Fest
- Official Home of the Chicago GAA
- Our Lady of Knock Rosary Procession
- Monthly Mass and Irish Breakfast
- Mother's Day Buffet/High Tea
- Gaelic Park Players
- Heritage and Harvest Day
- Children's Irish Cultural Camp
- The Carraig Pub & Beer Garden
- Young Gaelic Association
- Premier Event Venue for Weddings, Parties, and Concerts



Saturday, April 4



Sunday, April 5



Saturday, April 11



Sunday, April 12



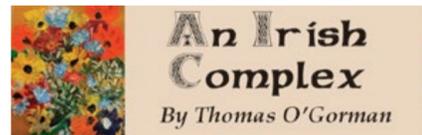
Sunday, May 3

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You'll see these artists and so much more in August! Follow us on socials for more.





The Power and Strength of Irish Sacrifice

This April marks the 110th anniversary of the Proclamation of the Irish Republic. The final military arming of the Irish against the British rule. April 26, 1916 to be accurate. Armed attacks on Easter Monday at strategic sites across Dublin.

The initial salvo would not last long. Transforming itself into a guerrilla war after the leadership was tried, convicted and executed. Actions that finally motivated the population to outrage and a reinvigorated patriotism for armed conflict lasting to 1921. Ireland fought strategically across the landscape until the British government acquiesced their exit in a peaceful establishment of an Irish Free State. Finally turning back the starvation of colonialism after eight centuries.

Shakespeare often pierces the hide of human living with a short-handed wisdom without competition. He writes with a surgeon's eye and a psychiatrist's synthesis. His sense of personal stillness is an appropriate place to begin to speak of my grandfather,

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James J. O'Gorman of the 3rd Tipperary IRA (on right in picture below). Gunman. Rebel. Political man of action. Poet. Charming. Pioneer of Australia's bushland. Lover of song. Faithful disciple of the Gospel.

At night, I still can hear the echo of his voice, respond to my grandmother, Rebecca Crowe O'Gorman's, "Ave's" and "Pater Nosters," an every night rosary of their lives. Like the monks of Glenstal Abbey.

But, he became at home in America. In the stillness it offered. But in it, he was never far from a mythic Ireland the poets sang.

John Adams, a founding father of America's Republic, and our second president, wrote in a letter to his wife, Abigail Adams (12 May 1780):

"I must study politics and war, that our sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. Our sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history... commerce and agriculture in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain."

I am reminded of this when I reflect on my grandfather, James J. O'Gorman, a youthful revolutionary, once, of Hollyford Parish, County Tipperary. A pragmatic military leader in Ireland's War of Independence. A bright student of the study of politics and war. A fearless crack shot. Friend of Dan Breen and Michael Collins.

In the dark days of crippled independence, he fled the land he loved that his sons might still have liberty. And that their children may have the right to study painting and poetry. That, my friends, allows me the freedom to speak, today, as a painter and a poet, about the life they built.

My grandfather would also insist today that I remind



you of words spoken by the martyred 16th president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln. He was fond of reminding folk - "A man has to do his own growing no matter how tall his grandfather was."

I recall the sight and sound of him. His bearing and carriage. The touch and the smell of him. The wry wit, poetic intuition and song of him. I remember his temper for both its quickness and fairness.

While wounded as a British soldier, in France in World War I, he was shipped back to recuperate in Ireland. He would not return to the front. Instead he would join his brothers and neighbors in Ireland's military stand against Britain following the Easter Rising. His natural skills and military training were needed resources in the struggle of liberating Ireland.

Like many Irish deserters of the British army, he swore a blood oath to the Irish cause, the liberation of his homeland. Never flinching from journeys through painful days of misery, torture and death. The secret culture of anti-British insurgency consumed him more than war against the Kaiser had.

The world of turmoil in the aftermath of the Rising of 1916 became his life. He was consumed by the dream of independence. And the steps needed to bring that about. These were the thoughts consuming

the mind of a young man still healing from wounds received at the front. Once carrying a rifle for the foreign regime occupying his homeland, he turned his weapon now on their oppressor. In the secret war unleashed by Michael Collins the Irish would discover the footfall of surprise aggression. He swore a blood oath to it. A life of ambush. Merciless violence. Silent destruction carried as if from out of a haunted mist. All had changed, Yeats would say. "Changed utterly."

In an age of carnage, the Irish resolve for liberty was born in the untidy hearts of a population more at home reacting to abuse than debating political philosophy. Cruelty was an enabler to the birth of the Irish Free State. It stretched the resolve of human allegiance and the generosity of sacrifice.

My grandfather saw the bullets and the gas that heralded modernity on the muddy battlefields of France. He witnessed the mindless slaughter at the front. He also saw the frailty of monarchs as thrones perished as boys were slaughtered. He knew the loneliness of Australian summers and longed for the healing only bold Tipperary women could accommodate.

His marriage to my grandmother, Rebecca Crowe O'Gorman after the start of the free state did not end the bloodshed as a fierce civil war began. Now between opposing Irish rival political differences. But his opposition to the killing of rival rebels brought about his decision to leave Ireland. Carrying his three young sons and wife to a land of fresh liberty on the shores of Lake Michigan.

My boyhood was made shockingly adventurous by the quiet family tales and sibling gossip of his military service to Ireland during her final struggle for independence. He never spoke of it directly. We learned his coded vocabulary. He rarely carried on

a conversation about any of his deeds. His military leadership. His friendships or his violent undertakings. Wartime episodes of guerrilla fighting and commando sorties were always the stories others told of him. He disliked the attention of recollection.

I knew he was more than just another Irish immigrant. He was no Irish-gladhander. He was an exile. His cultural heritage was quiet. Obscure. Refined. Secretive. More Controlled than others. A man who carried a large private recollection deep inside his heart. I always thought it was sorrow. Rarely shared. Never bragged about. As refined as the aroma of the fragrant tobacco with which he filled a room.

In the cry of the terrible beauty language conversations demanded cautious prescriptions. Codes of silence and subterfuge. Romantic only through the lens of time and sentimental only from long distance. The battle for freedom was as much an internal spiritual reality as it was a conscious physical and political one. A story told across the world of Ireland's military exiles.

But these events and motives are good to remember and savor for their human measure recounting the power and strength of Irish sacrifice that began more than 110 years ago.



11th Year of John West's Féile Sponsorship

John West, proud sponsors of the GAA's under-15 annual Féile Peile na nÓg (Gaelic football) and Féile na nGael (camogie and hurling) competitions today (Thursday) launched John West Féile 2026 with a strong nutrition message.

The competition has grown remarkably in that time to become one of the biggest underage sporting events in Europe - and the sponsorship has seen John West stress the importance of a healthy, balanced diet among not only players, but also the wider GAA community.

The importance of healthy meal options was also stressed by John West Féile 2026 Ambassadors, Féile veterans and inter-county stars: Dublin's Leah Caffrey (LGFA), Galway All-Ireland camogie winning captain Carrie Dolan, Tipperary hurler Darragh McCarthy and Derry footballer Shane McGuigan.

The company has reaffirmed its long-standing commitment to the GAA's national under-15 Gaelic games celebration, across camogie, Gaelic football, hurling and LGFA, as well as rounders and handball, until 2028.

In 2025, over 400 club sides, comprising 9,000 players, competed in the finals alone, across numerous venues nationwide, following qualification at county level.

The John West Féile finals have drawn teams from all over the world, including the Americas, Australasia, mainland Europe and Britain, where the competition is credited with helping fuel interest in Gaelic games amongst children from non-Irish backgrounds.

According to John West Ireland Head of Marketing, Anne-Claire Monde, the company is investing in the promotion of nutrition and resilience among juveniles.

"Every year, thousands of young players are brought together annually in celebration of the GAA's community ethos through underage competition," she said.

"John West consistently seeks to inform people of the benefits of everyday nutrition for all in support of a healthy lifestyle.

"Throughout its sponsorship of Féile, John West has focused on the importance of natural, tasty nutrition in fuelling families, whilst encouraging teenagers to actively participate in Gaelic games.

"As a trusted, high quality, heritage, but innovative, health and nutrition brand, our convenient and sustainable products are a natural fit for families

involved with the GAA.

"And as John West Féile is, for many players, their first time to compete in a national competition, the GAA has always worked to ensure a positive experience for players, parents and coaches, who make an incredible contribution to ensure it is so special."

According to Uachtarán CLG, Jarlath Burns, fun and friendship, along with the invaluable input of volunteers, must never be taken for granted by the GAA.

"John West Féile has nurtured a wonderful enthusiasm for our games and has been the making of many friendships and memories," he said.

"Generations have experienced the joy of being a part of Féile na nGael and Féile Peile na nÓg, as well as the rounders and handball competitions, and I warmly thank John West for its sponsorship.

"John West Féile provides young players with lifelong memories."

Top-tier sides compete in what are known as the national finals, which this year take place in Carlow and Laois on Saturday, June 20 (Féile na nGael) and Derry on Saturday, June 27 (Féile Peile na nÓg)

Teams at other grades will take part in regional finals at venues throughout the country over the same two Saturdays.

Féile na nGael county competitions are scheduled for the month of April, with Féile Peile na nÓg county competitions taking place in May.

Féile na nGael has been in existence since 1971, while Féile Peile na nÓg will mark 44 years this year.

Ladies Gaelic Football Association President, Trina Murray, highlighted John West Féile's emphasis on fun, friendship, and participation.

"Players will make new friends and re-connect with old friends. John West Féile will once again provide young players with experiences they will never forget."

According to Uachtarán an Chumann Camógaiochta, Brian Molloy, John West Féile is one of the most special events in the camogie calendar, giving young players the chance to represent their clubs and communities on a national stage, while creating friendships and memories which will last a lifetime.

"I warmly thank John West for their continued commitment to Féile - a competition our players will remember for the rest of their lives. The very best of luck to all players. Go n-éirí go geall libh agus bainigi taitneamh as!"

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Irish Fest Announces 2026 Lineup Featuring Gaelic Storm, Gardiner Brothers and More

Milwaukee Irish Fest will return to Henry Maier Festival Park Aug. 13-16, unveiling its 2026 entertainment lineup featuring internationally acclaimed headliners and rising Irish talent. In celebration of the St. Patrick's Day season, the festival is offering a limited-time buy one, get one free promotion on general admission tickets.

Among the returning headliners are crowd favorites Gaelic Storm, Gardiner Brothers, Altan, Scythian, Eileen Ivers and JigJam.

Artists making their Irish Fest debut include rock-infused traditional Irish quartet Wickerlight; the all-female traditional Irish powerhouse Biird; Irish American folk and roots duo Campbell and Jensen; and viral social media bagpiper Ally the Piper.

With more than 16 stages of entertainment, Irish Fest offers one of the most expansive celebrations of Irish culture in the world. Since its founding in 1981, the festival has brought generations together for four days of live music, dance, cultural exhibits, sporting demonstrations and authentic cuisine along Milwaukee's lakefront.

"The lineup reflects the evolving sounds of Ireland today while honoring the deep traditions that have defined the festival for more than four decades," said Molly Modlinski, festival director. "There is a wide variety of music to discover across all of our stages."

The BOGO promotion runs through March 18 and represents the lowest available price on admission to the festival. View the full lineup and get BOGO tickets at irishfest.com.

Milwaukee Irish Fest is presented by CelticMKE, a nonprofit organization with the mission to preserve and promote Irish culture through music education, archival initiatives, concerts and family programming. Learn more at WWW.CELTICMKE.COM



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Leitrim's Lark Fionnuala Maxwell: Coming to Chicago

In April 2026, Chicago will be blessed by a visit from the brilliant All-Ireland Champion singer-songwriter Fionnuala Maxwell of County Leitrim. Friday night April 10th, Fionnuala kicks-off the weekend by headlining a concert, "An Evening Celebrating Irish Song," at Chief O'Neill's Irish Pub on Elston from 7-9pm.

On Saturday April 11th from 10-430pm, the first of two all-day workshops of traditional Irish singing will be held at the Irish American Heritage Center. Attendees will learn traditional Irish songs, and Irish singing techniques, including ornamentation. This workshop will also feature a "simulated Fleadh."

On Sunday April 12th 1030am to 230pm, the all-day workshop will be repeated at Chicago Gaelic Park in Oak Forest at 147th and Ridgeland. Upon conclusion of the workshop, Fionnuala and local singers will perform from 3-4pm in the Carraig Pub.

Readers, if you have any interest in Irish singing, these workshops are THE PLACE to either get started OR advance your skills. Events are open to singers of all singing levels and experience, ages 13 y/o and up. You will learn from the absolute best, and experience authentic Irish singing rarely offered or heard in Chicago. Maxwell grew up as the

daughter of farmers in rural south Leitrim, near the village of Drumsna, a small village on the banks of the River Shannon, close to Carrick. Her mother was one of eleven children, and part of the musical Hartigan family. Her Hartigan grandparents were founding members of the Drumsna branch of Comhaltas.

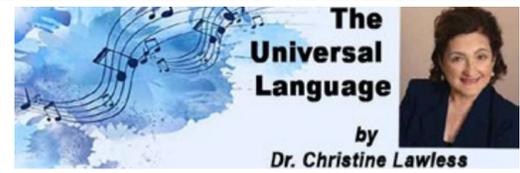
Fionnuala's father's family, the Reillys, were also incredibly supportive of singing and music. Maxwell said, "...from the time I was about seven years old, any time I entered their house I would be asked for a tune or a song. They would tell me stories about my cousin, the singer Eleanor Shanley, whose career they followed closely"

At age 7, Maxwell started on the humble tin whistle, studying with local teacher Ian Lee, and later at Joe Mooney Summer School in Drumshanbo. But she was always drawn to singing, and when the traditional singing tutor Seán Garvey arrived a few years later, she was hooked.

She thinks she was seven when she sang at her first Fleadh Cheoil but knew extraordinarily little. On the

advice of the adjudicator, she looked up the lyrics of the local song "The Shores of Lough Bran." Both her aunt and grandaunts had sung this song, and that moment really set her on the path of traditional singing.

Because the singing tradition was not particularly strong in the area when she was growing up, Fionnuala had to seek songs and guidance elsewhere, learning from famed singers such as Carmel Gunning from Sligo and Donegal-born Pauline



was honored to be crowned All-Ireland senior ballad singing champion at the Fleadh in Ballina. It was her first year in the senior competition. She began to write songs as a teen and was delighted to place third in Clonmel in the newly composed song competition at about 14 years of age. Later,

19, 17, 14 and 9. They are all musical. Maxwell spends her time bringing traditional songs to audiences in New York, Italy, Berlin, Bulgaria, the UK and across Ireland. One of her greatest joys has been establishing The Leitrim Larks, a group focused on rediscovering local ballads and the simple joy of singing. She also brings local heritage into classrooms around the country. She currently serves as chairperson of Leitrim Comhaltas and has adjudicated at Fleadh competitions for many years. Of this she says, "While competitions can be subjective, I see them as an opportunity to encourage singers and remind them that traditional singing is about celebrating your own voice, not imitating someone else."

Do not miss the opportunity to watch and learn from All-Ireland Champion singer-songwriter Fionnuala Maxwell. See our ad below to buy tickets for concerts or register for workshops. Contact me at christine.lawless@yahoo.com



Hanley. She also attended Scoil Éigse for many years, learning from singers such as Séamus MacMathúna, Colm O'Donnell, Paddy Berry, Paddy Tunney, and Deirdre Scanlan.

In 1997 Fionnuala began an Arts degree in University College Dublin (UCD), but before heading to Dublin she

she won the competition with a humorous song called "The Eslin Man."

Fionnuala graduated as a secondary school teacher from UCD in 2001 and taught English and German in various schools until a few years ago. She is married to Sean and has four children, now aged

John Hammond, Jr.

We have just lost one of America's premiere blues players, John Hammond, Jr., (November 13, 1942 - February 28, 2026) who was an American blues singer and guitarist; his career spanned six decades. John Hammond, Jr. was a son of record producer and talent scout John Henry Hammond who discovered Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, and had Columbia Records release an album by the legendary Robert Johnson. John Henry Hammond didn't connect with his gifted son.

Inspired by blues singer-songwriter, Jimmy Reed, John Hammond, Jr. began playing guitar in high school, soon playing with many blues musicians still unknown like Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Levon Helm's New Hawks (later known as The Band), Mike Bloomfield, Dr. John, and Duane Allman. That is quite an impressive lineup of backing musicians. According to John Hammond, Jr., "I first became aware of blues music when my father brought me to hear Big Bill Broonzy in 1949. I was seven years old, and it made a big impression on me. I remember the music and the man. He was a friend of my father's so I was introduced to him, and he was just this huge guy, with a very gentle spirit and a fantastic guitar player."

"I always gravitated towards blues music for whatever reason. By the time I was in my early teens, I was a blues fanatic. I never thought that I would ever play an instrument or be a professional player but I loved the music. When I got a guitar, that was it. Solo is, for me, where the art belongs. If you could pull it off solo, you were really doing it."

We heard the complaint that white bluesmen were ripping off black blues players like Sonny Terry and Brownie McGee. In Hammond's case, he loved the music and was promoting it.

"I eventually began to buy records and become aware of this music that was so compelling to me. During the '50s I was a teenager and beginning to form my tastes and blues was at the forefront. I was into artists like and Josh White, Big Bill Broonzy...when rock and roll hit the scene in the mid-'50s. I liked artists like Bo Diddly and Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent and the Blue Cats...and for the first time you were hearing black and white artists together...I don't know, I was just very excited by the music and the way it made me feel."

John Hammond often played a steel-bodied National Reso-Phonic Guitar tuned to open tuning (or an actual guitar chord) that became known as the "barrelhouse style." Hammond had a deep bluesy voice and played an expressive harmonica in a neck brace like Bob Dylan that added a rhymlal train sound.

I heard him live 3 times. The first time was when he joined black blues players at San Francisco State during a successful blues festival, and when Hammond came out, looking a bit like Johnny Cash from a distance, the audience and the black players seemed puzzled by the appearance of a white musician playing at a tribute to the Mississippi Delta blues players like Robert Johnson, the great "bottleneck" slide guitarist known for the song, "Crossroads." By the time Hammond was finished, the audience and visiting black players were on their feet clapping. John was an apostle and a missionary of the blues. He also played in Los Angeles when I saw him do an evocative blues set. One audience member remarked that "the only thing white about John Hammond, Jr. is the color of his skin."

John Hammond was very polite back stage and showed me a blues lick.

In 1963, he made his debut recording, on Vanguard Records. That album, John Hammond, was one of the first blues albums by a white artist during the folk boom years. Since then, he recorded 34 albums. In July of 1963, he played at the Newport

Folk Festival and was featured in the Blues Workshop alongside John Lee Hooker, Mississippi John Hurt, Dave Van Ronk and Sonny Terry. He was critically acclaimed and enjoyed modest commercial success earning respect from white and black musicians, including John Lee Hooker, Mike Bloomfield and harmonica player, Charlie Musselwhite. Hammond was the only person who had both Eric Clapton and Jimi Hendrix in his band at the same time, both musicians relatively unknown at the time. John Hammond also connected the Band to Bob Dylan after he went electric and began his folk-rock tour in the sixties.



made it onto the soundtrack of the movie Two-Lane Blacktop.

John Hammond, Jr. was perhaps the best white blues singer and guitarist, and though effective on recording, I believe nothing compares to when I saw him perform live. He deserved the Grammy Award nomination for his performance of "Got Love if You Want it" on the album, Blues Explosion. Hammond hosted the 1991 Bravo UK television documentary, The Search for Robert Johnson, detailing the life of the Delta bluesman. John Hammond had a longstanding friendship with songwriter Tom Waits and did an album of Waits' songs.

There is not enough space to list all the accomplishments of John Hammond, Jr. but he lives on via the recordings. John Hammond died from cardiac arrest at a hospital at the age of 83.

If you have any interest in blues music, John Hammond, Jr. is truly worth your time.

References: Wikipedia, and live performances.

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After the April 12th workshop, Fionnuala and singers will perform at the Carraig Pub 3-4pm.

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Joe Murphy - American Born Irish Patriot

The United States of America has always been a refuge for the Irish, this peaked during the mid-1800's when Ireland suffered a potato blight. The years between 1840s - 1850s proved to be a period of starvation and disease. At the same time evictions were in the region of 70,000 resulting in the displacement of up to 500,000 people. These evictions were caused mainly by absentee British based landlords seeking to maximize their profits by converting from tillage farming to cattle grazing, thereby ridding themselves of their smallholding tenants. This period is often referred to

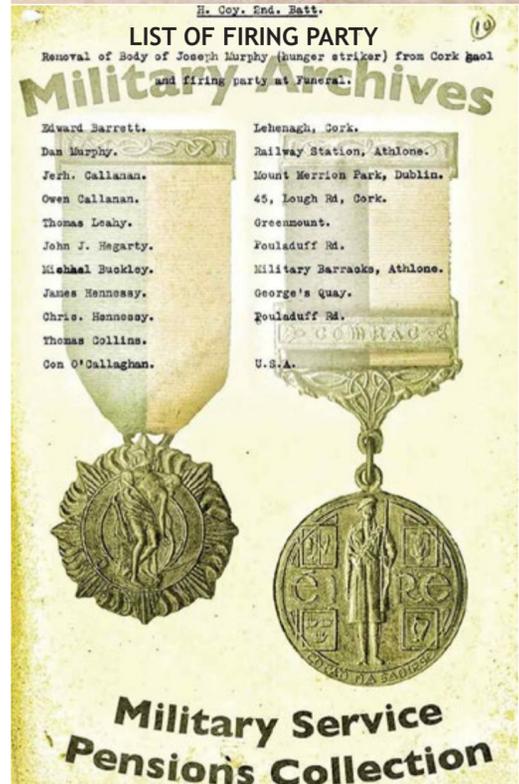
as the Great Famine despite food, and grain been exported to further enrich the absentee landlords. With over one million people dying and two million emigrating to the four corners of the world, today it would be described as ethnic cleansing.

Murphy Family

Against this background and having relatives living in America, Timmy Murphy and his wife Nora decided to emigrate to Boston seeking a better life and raising a family. Sailing from Queenstown (Cobh) following a similar voyage of so many 'Coffin ships' which departed the same harbor during the



JOSEPH MURPHY.
Who gave his young life for Ireland in Cork Gaol on 25th October, 1920 after 76 days fast.
R.I.P.
H. Coy. End. Batt.



Great Hunger.

They raised 5 children, Joe, sisters Mary and Annie, brothers Richard and Danny.

Joe was born in Lynn, Massachusetts on May 10th 1895, spending his early years in Lynn. Eventually the family decided to return to Cork and to the Murphy family home. The Murphy home and grounds were located on Pouladuff Road (Poll Dubh) Cork.

Pouladuff Road is on the Southside of Cork City. The area and surrounding areas such as Togher and Ballyphehane were predominantly inhabited by market gardeners & their families. It gets its name from the time of public hangings and burials at Gallows Green at the city end of the road. It's reported that members of the United Irishman captured after the 1798 rebellion were hung at Gallows Green, which was used as a place of execution for centuries, and it became a very nationalistic area.

As a young family surrounded by neighbours and friends, they soon settled into their new life in Cork. Joe and the rest of his siblings attended the local Togher boys and girls National School and there they met the Hegarty siblings Mamie, John Joe and Nan (The Hegartys of The Laurels) little did these young people realise the important role that they would all come to play in the future fight for Irish Independence.

Growing up in Togher in the early part of the 20th century rural activities would come to the fore such as road bowling, hurling and football with St Finbarr's Hurling and Football Club. (this year they are celebrating their 150th anniversary).

Hunting was also a favourite pastime, when a local club was established in 1880 which they named Cork National Hunt Club. The name of the club epitomised national beliefs and functioned as a constant reminder to its members.

Cork Volunteers

With the establishment of

the Volunteers in Cork like many young men both the Murphy's and Hegarty's siblings with the encouragement and support of their parents became active, while the girls joined Cumann na mBan when it was established. In their parish G and H Companies were established, Joe and John Joe (my father) joined H company. They helped to raise funds for the Brigade by collecting money at church gates around Cork City. They all became involved in training in the use of weapons at which they excelled they organised military parades, drills (with a shortfall in arms, hurley sticks were borrowed from St Finbarr's) and marches and attended meetings in the volunteer's headquarters on Share St. John Joe had the skill to make Croppy Pikes similar to those used in the 1798 rebellion. While being no substitute for guns nevertheless formidable and dangerous weapons in the hands of determined men.

World War 1 -1914-1918

When the Conscription Act was passed by the British House of Commons in April 1918 many young Irishmen were encouraged by John Redmond and his Irish Parliamentary Party to join the British Army, this they did in their thousands. Many joined for altruistic reasons fighting for the freedom of small nations others for pure financial gain to support their families. Meanwhile the leadership of the Volunteers were totally opposed to men joining any British regiment.

The passing of the Act saw the men and women of H company fund raising for the Brigade to prevent conscription of men to the British Army. This campaign proved successful as conscription was never enacted in Ireland unlike the rest of the British Isles. There was an influx of young men joining the Volunteers while the threat of conscription existed but left once the British government abandoned this policy. On the other hand, the Murphy and Hegarty families were fully committed to the overall cause, honouring their oath and



Joe's gravestone in the Republic Plot

continuing their membership.

When America joined the War in 1917 it gave the Cork IRA the opportunity to secure arms from Irish American soldiers and sailors that were based in Queenstown (Cobh).

Some were secured on a voluntary basis other by clandestine methods (that is another story).

After the Armistice with Germany which ended the First World War, many returning soldiers joined the Volunteers. These men were fully trained and combat hardened soldiers, men such as Tom Barry brought a professional training approach to the campaign in the forthcoming fight for Irish freedom.

In Cork on Armistice Day there was a (well documented) daring prison escape to freedom. Captain Donnchadh McNeilus (Donegal man) of the Cork Brigade had shot a RIC officer in a struggle trying to avoid capture. If the officer died McNeilus was sure to hang. Joe played a highly active role in his escape.

Many volunteers captured by the British and brought to Cork Gaol were tortured and shot in the back with the official cause of death reported as "trying to escape". Joe helped McNeilus avoid such a fate.

Over the next few years, the Cork Brigade would avenge all these murders

Westminster General Election

When London called a General Election for the 14th of December 1918, Joe together with other Volunteers and members of Cumann na mBan helped in fundraising, erecting posters, guarding polling stations and assisting both Sinn Fein candidates standing for the Cork City Constituency. Both candidates J.J. Walsh and Liam de Roiste were elected.

Of the 105 Irish seats nationwide, Sinn Fein (SF) won a total of 73 seats, and because of this support they set up the first Dail (Parliament) in Dublin in opposition and rejecting the Westminster Parliament.

Establishment of Dail Eireann 1919

On January 21, 1919 the first Dail met at the Mansion House in Dublin. It ratified the Irish Republic and refusing to take their seats at Westminster. It declared Ireland a sovereign independent state formally breaking ties with United Kingdom. Not all (SF) elected members attended as some were serving jail terms imposed by the British Authorities.

On the day of the first Dail two RIC officers were killed in an ambush at Soloheadbeg in County Tipperary, by a small band of active volunteers seizing explosives acting on their own initiative. This event is believed to be the beginning of the War of Independence.

War of Independence

Joe along with his comrades in H and G companies became involved in many raids and ambushes for arms. He was at this time employed by the Cork Corporation in which he had the use of a horse and cart. Apart from his work commitments this allowed him to help the family deliver their vegetables to city markets, allowing him to move freely gathering valuable intelligence, especially the movements of the British Army and RIC. All intelligence gathered by the men and women of H company was relayed via their section leader John Joe Hegarty who had another of his men Con Harrington acting as the personal assistant to the Brigade OC, Lord Mayor Thomas MacCurtain.

Intelligence became a vital weapon in the struggle for freedom.

Joe was actively involved in many high-profile activities increasing local resistance, preventing the British Army when they attempted to raid farms in order to export cattle to England.

Away from the constant danger as an active volunteer, Joe also had a social life, this involved country sports playing and supporting St Finbarr's GAA club and Road Bowling at which he excelled. Bowling was an extremely popular pastime on the Pouladuff and Togher roads. It was also around this time that he met and fell in love with Mary O'Leary to whom he intended marrying. Like all young men and women, the couple enjoyed country walks and going to dances arranged by the members of Cumann na mBan. These dances were used as fund raisers for the Cork Brigade.

1920 - The Year Cork went from Relative Peace to Guerrilla Warfare.

In the local elections held in January 1920 (SF) won thirty of the total fifty-seven seats on the Cork Corporation. As a result, Tomas McCurtain was elected the first Republican Lord Mayor of Cork. His first proposal in office at the City Hall was to recognise Dail Eireann as the legal, constitutional parliament of the Irish Nation. This set the tone for significant future events that occurred later in the city.

The Murphy and Hegarty families, together with H company, were very proactive in these elections.

Within a few short weeks of his election on the 20th of March 1920 incidentally his 36th birthday, McCurtain was murdered at his home in Blackpool in front of his pregnant wife and family by members of the RIC.

It was a result of McCurtain's murder that the Corporation donated a plot of ground at Saint Finbarr's cemetery which today is known as the Republican plot. McCurtain would not be the last Lord Mayor or Patriot to be buried there before the year end.

Terence MacSwiney became McCurtain's successor both as Brigade



Joes Nephew Harry, and Grandniece Shirley accepting his medal

Commandant and as Lord Mayor of Cork.

In his acceptance speech he uttered the immortal words regarding the conflict "Not on our side a rivalry of vengeance but one of endurance" before declaring "It is not they who can inflict the most but they that can suffer most will endure "prophetic words that he would soon put into practise.

Joe and H company continued their activities under their new commanding officer who they knew personally and for whom they had the greatest of respect.

They continued to raid gun shops, homes, and trains. They had men working in the railway stations who gave them the information of which trains were safe to raid. This provided them the opportunity to secure dispatches, arms and bicycles destined for local British Army Barracks. Bicycles were so important at the time that a Bicycle Core was established for scouting when ambushes were being planned. Women of Cumann na mBan had members working in shops, hotels and big houses also providing vital information to the IRA on the movements of British personal and spies.

On the 21st of June, Joe and H company engaged in the major attack of Farren Barracks. This attack lasted for over 3 hours, as RIC reinforcements were delayed by other IRA volunteers. This they achieved by cutting phone lines, digging trenches, and felling trees. This continued to be a regular tactic used by the Brigade.

Despite all these dangerous activities, the first Republican wedding was planned for the 26th in the Hegarty household, the bride Mamie Hegarty, Mamie (President Cumann na mBan) was marrying John Forde a fellow member of H company, her sister Nan (Captain) as Bridesmaid and Johns cousin Paddy Forde (fellow volunteer) as Best Man all dressed in uniform. As this was in breach of the British authorities, thus the Church had to be guarded during the ceremony.

The bridal parties' journey to and from the Church also had to be escorted.

Joe and the Murphy family were all active in these arrangements. It also gave him time to reflect on his own plans to marry his beloved fiancée Mary O'Leary

As the war continued to escalate during 1920 Michael Collins issued a decree from Dublin to increase pressure and further disruption on the British administration nationwide. This was planned for early April to coincide with the fourth anniversary of the 1916 rising.

Joe together with H Company burnt their local RIC Barracks in Togher. This Barracks was situated only a few fields away from the Hegartys of The

Laurels. The arms for this were taken from the John Joe's arm dump. The arms were collected and delivered by local Cumann na mBan members who also had them returned safely. The order to burn the Barracks was issued to prevent the RIC and or the Black and Tans from reoccupying them in an area that was now under the control of the IRA, Pouladuff and Togher was one such area. On the same evening orders were given to burn tax office records although not necessarily the buildings. Both these successful actions resulted in putting huge financial and logistic strain on the British administration in Ireland.

Jailed Without Trial and Hunger Strike

In July and August 1920, only weeks after the wedding many volunteers were captured and jailed in Cork without trial. This action by the authorities resulted in several of them going on a mass hunger strike. Con Neenan in his papers wrote that he, Joe Murphy, Terence MacSwiney, and Michael Fitzgerald were Not in favour of a strike.

Their actions were brought to a worldwide audience by several American journalists as Joe was in fact an American citizen.

Mary O'Leary together with members of Cumann na mBan were busy collecting parcels of food and cigarettes for the comfort and well-being of the prisoners who were not on hunger strike. The

plight of the hunger strikers gripped the city with protest slogans such as "Release the Prisoners" appearing on the walls.

When reminiscing about Joe, Mary told her grandsons that she used Joes sisters' family pass to gain access to the prison. Joe gave her one of his miraculous medals, this she kept for the remainder of her long life.

Michael Fitzgerald was the first to die, and on the 25th of October Joe Murphy died after 76 days on hunger strike. His death is often overshadowed because on the same day his Brigade OC. Lord Mayor Terence McSwiney also died in Brixton Prison London. It is ironic that 3 of the four men Not in favour of the strike paid the ultimate sacrifice. Unlike deValera in 1916 who was also born in America, the British refused to spare Joes life.

During my research I discovered that by a twist of faith, Joes fiancée (Mary) granddaughter married McSwineys grandson.

Joe's body was removed from his cell by John Joe who placed the tricolour over his remains and had the lid of the coffin bolted tightly so that the British could not have the flag removed, as they had previously attempted. Joe was given a guard of honour at the family parish Church through the night. This the same Church that Joe had attended in June for the Hegarty wedding

JimHegartyAuthor@gmail.com



Author Jim Hegarty at Hunger Strike Memorial Glasnevin Dublin



Joe's American relatives visiting Joe Murphy House



unveiling of plaque (1960) Examiner



On the Law

Matthew Gannon, John Scanlon, Martin Healy, Jr. and Kevin Veugeler
HEALY SCANLON VEUGELER GANNON
TRIAL ATTORNEYS

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.

Gannon is a law firm comprised of eight trial attorneys and four "Of Counsel" attorneys, two of whom are from Ireland. We are located downtown at 161 N. Clark Street, Suite 2200, Chicago, Illinois 60601 (312-977-0100) (overlooking Daley Center). www.HSVGLaw.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.

Healy Scanlon Veugeler

Tort Liability in High-Risk Recreational Activities

By Neomi Bartolo

Recreational activities such as bungee jumping, ziplining, and skydiving inherently involve significant physical risk. Although Illinois law does not categorically prohibit injured participants from bringing tort claims against recreational operators, successfully maintaining such claims can be difficult. Courts impose substantial barriers that often prevent recovery, particularly through the doctrines of assumption of risk and the enforcement of

liability waivers. Illinois recognizes traditional negligence claims in the recreational context. A plaintiff must establish duty, breach, causation, and damages, and courts acknowledge that recreational operators owe participants a duty of reasonable care.

For instance, in Buchaklian v. Lake County Family YMCA, the court held that operators must protect participants from non-obvious dangers. Likewise, Largosa v. Ford Motor Co. demonstrates

that liability may arise in connection with activities like bungee jumping where negligence is present.

However, these principles operate more as a formal baseline than a practical pathway to recovery. In application, courts frequently find that the risks giving rise to injury are inherent to the activity itself, thereby limiting or eliminating liability.

The most significant doctrinal obstacle is the assumption of risk doctrine. Illinois courts treat voluntary participation in inherently dangerous recreational activities as an implicit acceptance of known and foreseeable risks.

In Coleman v. Ramada Hotel Operating Co., the court emphasized that recovery is barred when injuries result from risks intrinsic to the activity. This creates a critical distinction, inherent risk, those integral to the activity, are deemed accepted by the participant. While extrinsic risk, those created by negligence, may still support a claim.

For example, consider a participant in a skydiving excursion. If the individual is injured during landing due to the inherent unpredictability of wind conditions or the physical impact associated with parachute descent, a court would likely classify that injury as arising from an inherent risk of skydiving—one the participant knowingly accepted.

By contrast, if the injury occurs because the operator failed to properly maintain the parachute equipment, packed it incorrectly, or provided inadequate safety instructions, the risk would be considered extrinsic to the activity. In that situation, the harm would stem not from the nature of skydiving itself, but from the operator's negligence, and a tort claim may still be viable.

In practice, this distinction is difficult for plaintiffs to overcome. Courts frequently

characterize injuries as arising from inherent risks, even where plaintiffs argue that operator conduct contributed to the harm. As a result, assumption of risk often functions as a complete bar to recovery rather than a mere defense.

Liability waivers further narrow the already limited scope of potential claims. Courts generally enforce pre-injury releases signed by participants in recreational activities, provided they are clear, unambiguous, and voluntarily.

Cases such as Rauch v. Big Picture, Inc. and Taylor v. Brooklyn Boulders, LLC illustrate the judiciary's willingness to uphold waivers that explicitly release operators from liability for ordinary negligence. When enforceable, these agreements often dispose of claims at an early stage.

Although courts scrutinize waivers for clarity and fairness, the threshold for enforcement is not especially high. Participants are typically bound so long as the waiver clearly communicates that negligence claims are being released; the participant had an opportunity to read and understand the document; and there is no evidence of fraud or coercion.

Challenges to waivers may succeed where the language is ambiguous or where the alleged misconduct exceeds ordinary negligence. As seen in Diedrich v. Wright, factual disputes about equipment defects or participant knowledge may prevent early dismissal, but such cases are the exception rather than the rule.

Liability is most likely to arise where the operator's conduct introduces risks that are not inherent to the activity its. For example, failure to maintain equipment, inadequate safety procedures, or misleading instructions may create actionable negligence.

Even so, courts often interpret these duties narrowly. If the alleged failure is closely tied to the nature of the activity, it is frequently recharacterized

as part of the assumed risk. This doctrinal overlap further complicates plaintiffs' efforts to distinguish negligence from inherent danger.

Illinois follows a modified comparative negligence system, allowing plaintiffs to recover reduced damages based on their share of fault. However, this framework may have limited practical impact in the recreational context. Where assumption of risk applies, it typically operates as a complete bar to recovery, rendering comparative fault analysis unnecessary. As explained in Sollami v. Eaton, the key issue is not simply the plaintiff's degree of fault, but whether the risk was one the plaintiff accepted by choosing to participate.

Under Illinois law individuals are not categorically barred from bringing tort claims for injuries sustained during activities such as bungee jumping, ziplining, or skydiving. However, the combined effect of assumption of risk and enforceable liability waivers makes successful recovery the exception rather than the rule.

In practice, courts require plaintiffs to demonstrate that their injuries arose not from the inherent dangers of the activity, but from distinct and avoidable negligence by the operator, a demanding standard that significantly limits the viability of such claims.



Noemi Bartolo is a law clerk at Healy Scanlon Veugeler Gannon and a 2L at DePaul College of Law. Noemi has received a CALL for her LARC II: Intellectual Property course, is President of the Society for Asylum & Immigration, Treasurer for the Intellectual Property Law Society, and a clinical student in DePaul's Business Law Clinic.

The Legacy of St. Patrick's Day

What unites seven diverse Irish American groups, President Trump, New York Mayor Mandami and Governor Hochul? All raised the prospect of Irish Unity and self-determination.

To mark St. Patrick's Day, 7 Irish American groups signed on to ads calling on the Irish and British Governments to plan, prepare, and set a date for the Irish Unity Referendums.

It was a diverse group with the Ancient Order of Hibernians and the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians representing the largest Irish American groups, alongside the Brehon Law Society, an umbrella group for Irish American lawyers across New York and the James Connolly Irish American Labour Coalition, the Irish American Unity Committee, the Knights of the Red Branch, and Friends of Sinn Féin.

The advertisement was carried across Irish American Media and on St. Patrick's Day, placed in The New York Times. On the same day, New York Governor Kathy Hochul restated her support for Irish Unity, and Mayor Mandami recognised the resistance and solidarity of the Irish and their right to self-determination.

In Washington D.C., speaking at a lunch in Congress attended by members, the Taoiseach and the DUP's Deputy First Minister, President Trump floated the idea of a merger between the North and South.

That must have been uncomfortable listening for a Taoiseach who refuses to plan, prepare or advocate for Irish Unity.

In the US & Canada, the Irish Unity message was shared.

This reflects the growing support for unity that we are witnessing across

North America. The call for unity has been made in state houses, Irish Centres, Congressional Offices, across dinner tables, and in conference centres.

Friends of Sinn Féin USA has an online activist group that meets monthly and has produced a series of online video interviews, is producing study guides, and is issuing calls to action.

It is the classic approach of educate, activate and organise, brought up to date for the online generation. This month, the Cleveland Mayor issued a proclamation, and the City Council recognised both the right to self-determination enshrined in the Good Friday Agreement and the motion agreed by the Dáil on the need to plan and prepare for unity.

An Taoiseach Martin recently said the calls for unity were "not much substance" & "premature." It would appear that he is not listening to Irish America, the NY Mayor & Governor, or getting news from various St. Patrick's Day parades, such as Toronto, where Irish Unity was front and centre.

The work across the US and Canada continues to build and manage a coalition for unity and the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

At present, the only group opposing this is the Irish Government of Micheal Martin.

Your voice can and must be heard across the US and in Dublin.

Have a great weekend, and remember that Irish Unity is not just for St. Patrick's Day, but forever.

Ciarán
Ciarán Quinn is the Sinn Féin Representative to North America

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Hub of Academic Excellence

Limerick's education landscape is rich and diverse and home to no fewer than ten Tertiary Education Institutions. Among these are the University of Limerick (UL), Mary Immaculate College (MIC) and Technological University of the



Shannon (TUS), incorporating Limerick School of Art and Design (LSAD) and Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB). Together, they offer a range of cutting-edge, industry relevant programmes, designed to ignite curiosity and equip students with skills needed to excel in their future careers.

The city boasts a thriving population of nearly 50,000 students, with a further 8,000 enrolled with private education providers. This vibrant student community energises every corner of Limerick, contributing to its dynamic urban character.

A Global, Diverse and Creative Community

Limerick's student population is international, with up to 20% coming from overseas and representing more than 100 countries. This rich diversity fuels creativity and innovation, key drivers of Limerick's growing reputation as a forward-thinking, globally connected city. This blend of cultures, perspectives and ideas shapes an environment

where collaboration thrives and new possibilities emerge.

A City Built for Student Life

Safe, vibrant and buzzing with life, Limerick is as welcoming as the people who call it home. The city is renowned for its friendliness, eclectic food scene and legendary nightlife. Its riverside setting as a Gateway City to the Wild Atlantic Way blends contemporary urban living with abundant green spaces, giving students the perfect balance of study, wellness and nature.

Promoting Limerick as a Leading Learning Destination

The Marketing and Communications team at Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) plays a key role in championing the city as a top destination for education, lifestyle and innovation. Through the unified Limerick Student City brand, the team works closely with UL, MIC, TUS and LCETB to showcase Limerick's world-class offering to both current and

prospective students. Using multi-channel campaigns and on the ground activations, LCCC highlights what makes Limerick truly exceptional: its modern learning facilities, thriving urban culture, supportive community

and expansive natural surroundings. It's a place where students can grow academically while enjoying a balanced, fulfilling lifestyle.

Discover more at: <https://www.limerick.ie/discover/learning>



Limerick is a unique destination for tourists, offering a perfect blend of friendly locals, captivating folklore, and hidden gems.

Limerick Greenway invites cyclists and walkers to explore scenic landscapes, while the medieval town of Kilmallock immerses visitors in history.

Thrill-seekers can enjoy the buzz of the Ballyhoura Mountains, while Lough Gur Lakeshore Park and its ancient Stone Circle offer a deeper connection to Ireland's past.

Treaty City Brewery Tours provide a taste of locally crafted beer, rounding out a memorable experience.

Limerick is a must-visit destination for tourists in 2025, where vibrant culture, rich history, stunning landscapes, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere await around every corner.

Limerick.ie #LimerickEdgeEmbrace



Swimming Upstream

By Charles Brady



I've Just Smashed Up My Own Room; I'd Like to Make a Complaint

After one look at this planet any visitor from outer space would say 'I want to see the manager'. William Burroughs Last night - this would be the night before St. Patrick's Day - I was having a conversation with one of my very few close friends. And as so often happens with just about anyone these days, the talk turned to the fiery chaos that the world is in at the moment... and President Donald Trump's part in it.

Now, the lady in question is one of the more decent human beings that I've met in my life. Behind the scenes here in Galway she does a great deal of good, and she does it without any fanfare; she's just one of those kind people. But she is normal and so she never... EVER... misses the chance to have a dig at me for having supported and defended so many of Mr. Trump's decisions these past years. And as someone who's irritating favourite words are 'I told you so' when I get it right (which, let's be honest, is most of the time, ha ha), I can't say I blame her.

At least I can say that when I get it wrong, I REALLY get it wrong. Although, broadly speaking, I would STILL be in favour of many of his decisions, but let's not go there.

The subject of a YouTube

clip from some years ago, where the photographer Platon talks of working on a shoot featuring Trump, came up. He had asked the then would-be President what it was like to perpetually be at the centre of a storm.

"He calmly looked at me", says Platon, "and said 'I am the storm'."

'I am the storm'. If ever there were shades of Stephen King's insane presidential candidate Greg Stillson (in 'The Dead Zone') it's in those four words: I am the storm.

My friend was silent for a moment. And then quietly said: "How sad. Please let him be gone."

For all the arguments and gnashing of teeth and outrage and venom that President Trump provokes, I think that this got to me the most profoundly. Because this wasn't some wild-eyed Leftie Loon spewing bile; this was an ordinary Irish woman who would generally wish harm on no one. But she wants... well, she wants him gone. In its way I found it both telling and chilling, that it has come to this.

Mind you, I've been looking at life in general a little differently, this past year. For a few months now my health has been giving me reminders of mortality - at least getting me used to being on nodding terms with it - and necessitating regular hospital

visits. I'm in good hands, though. We may moan about the Irish health system, but the truth is that when you are actually in the system, then the care and consideration that you receive is second to none.

My emotional fallout from it, though; that has been... well, curious to me. You see, while I enjoy life to the full, I've never really had much respect for my species. And here, obviously, I don't refer to politicians, who are in the main of a Lovecraftian order of being, semi-anthropomorphic and far removed from anything that I would recognise as even vaguely human.

OK, OK, I exaggerate. A bit. But here's a quick starter's question: when discussing Iran on Virgin Media's The Tonight Show, who said: "I can't think of an instance where bombing a country ended up resulting in a better situation."

Was it a) Pope Leo XIV; b) the Dalai Lama; c) Sinn Fein Foreign Affairs Spokesman Matt Carthy.

And if you answered c) then give yourself a cigar. It was indeed; and as a wiser man than I once said: There's no answer to that.

And just while we're on Sinn Fein, the party that apparently wouldn't know what a bomb was if they sat on one, hasn't Mary Lou McDonald been a hoot lately, lecturing all and sundry on boycotting President Trump for St. Patrick's Day? As others have pointed out, it's not hard to refuse to attend something that you weren't asked to in the first place. She reminds me of that Tina Fey

skit where Tina says: 'It sounds like another great party that I wasn't invited to!'

Yes, politicians. Please. Anyway, I digress.

It has certainly never been of much interest to me whether we survive another generation or leave behind one big burned cinder of a planet before the end of the 21st century. The truth is that I've often thought that the universe in general will be a better place without us in it.

As Mr. Burroughs says in the epigram up at the top there, if you were from outer space you would ask to see the manager. Yet here I am, undergoing one hell of a sea change. Because - and this is strange - just when I should be more cynical about humanity than ever, I find myself fervently wishing that Humankind will go on. Will perhaps even learn from its mistakes.

God forbid that I sound like the dreaded Greta Thurnberg, but isn't it about time to put our current crop of useless leaders out to pasture - or even better, pack them off to the glue factory. For heaven's sake, Trump will be 80 in June; Netanyahu is 76; Putin is 73 (allegedly) and on and on...

Of course there's nothing wrong with age, if it brings with it some wisdom; but maybe we should be stepping aside and letting some younger people make their own mistakes. God knows they can't be any worse.

I once thought that since Donald Trump WASN'T a politician, that he would do something different. Now I wonder what happened to him

to make him this way? Did he just (like a lot of youngsters today) simply never get told 'NO' on enough occasions?

I keep thinking of the lines by that great Irish writer-poet-painter George William Russell:

In Ancient shadows and twilights
Where childhood had strayed,
The world's great sorrows were born
And its heroes were made.
In the lost boyhood of Judas
Christ was betrayed.

We've been around as a recognizable species for around 300,000 years. Isn't it about time we got over our teething pains? Isn't it about time that we started to tidy our act up and...just do a bit bloody better?

What a world: endless explosions scream into the atmosphere from our many ongoing wars, screwing up the environment even more than it already is. And we send more and more men and women to die as little more than cannon fodder while old power-hungry sods sit back and pull the strings. Jeez, what are we like?

Do you remember those dimwit rock bands back in the 60s and 70s who thought that it was 'cool' to drive Rolls-Royces into swimming pools and smash up hotel bedrooms? I keep thinking of them also, of late.

After all, there's not much sense in asking to see the manager if you're the one who is wrecking the place to begin with.

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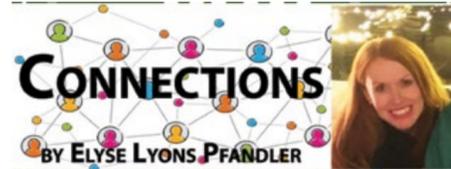
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years afterward. Research shows that surprising moments tend to stick in our memories more than ordinary ones. In the book "Surprise: Embrace

Surprises have a powerful way of staying with us. When I was in third grade, my parents decided to move to a different neighborhood, which meant I had to attend a new school. I remember feeling very sad about leaving my friends. I think some of their moms noticed how hard this was for me, so they organized a surprise going-away party. I had no idea it was coming, and I don't think I had ever been more surprised in my life. I still remember who was there and the framed poem they gave me. The joy I felt that day was very real, and it stayed with me for

the *Unpredictable and Engineer the Unexpected*," Tania Luna and Leeann Renninger discuss that surprise, whether good or bad, is important for bringing vitality to our lives. Surprise activates the dopamine system in our brains, helping us focus our attention and inspiring us to view our situation in new ways. Surprises break up the routine of life and create emotional experiences that are easier for our brains to remember. Some common surprises are parties, engagements, unexpected visits, or thoughtful gestures. My thoughtful husband, Dan, surprised me with an

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engagement ring while skiing. I thought he broke a leg, but he actually was on one knee with a proposal. That was a great relief and surprise! My kids remember when we surprised them with the announcement of a long-awaited trip to Disney World. They seem to remember the day we announced more than the announcement more than this fun reunion.

This past weekend, I had the opportunity to witness another sweet surprise at the Chicago St. Patrick's Day Parade. A group of us were sitting on the float that we ride on every year, waiting for the parade to start, when I happened to look over and see Laura (Kelly) Cowen receive a wonderful surprise. Her son Ryan had decided to come into town for the parade, and she had no idea he would be there. The Trinity Irish dancers were practicing behind us, and the little ponies were nearby when her college-age son suddenly walked up. Laura's reaction was pure joy. Both she and Ryan became a bit emotional when they saw each other. It was a darling moment, and everyone around us felt the happiness of that connection. Laura said that her son, who is now in college, had not attended the parade since he was nine years old, and all the memories of him as a boy flooded back. What St. Patrick's Day luck to witness the days at Disney.

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Some see it as a sleepy Northeastern village in the far north of Donegal, Ireland, but the residents of Muff village know it as a haven of Irish hospitality. With a real community feel from you arrive across the border from Derry city, many folk put down roots here and never leave. Muff, home to just less than 1500 residents, is more than a village on the tourist map of Ireland, as it is also the beginning/end of the now famous Wild Atlantic Way. If you begin the journey in Donegal, you will set off from the village of Muff; or if you begin the journey in Kinsale, Cork, you will finish the journey in Muff. Either way you are going to visit our village and experience the hospitality that awaits here. Muff is also proud to have been the home of playwright Brian Friel for many years. The village has much to offer tourists as they visit or

indeed pass through. With a fine-dining restaurant at The Treehouse Bar & Restaurant, you will find a menu to suit all tastes. This critically acclaimed dining haven is one of the North West's premier places to visit for a good food experience and a night out. Adjacent to the dining is the Ardmore Bar which boasts live music every weekend. You will find a first-class service within the dining area and a most comfortable relaxed



space in the bar. Nestled on the outskirts of the village, but within walking distance of all village amenities, including the picturesque nature-filled Greenway walk; the Treehouse Bar & Restaurant is a family-run business and has welcomed some of the worlds most famous stars to the locals since opening in 2018. You never know who you are going to meet within.



most renowned coffee shop in Donegal. And we won't have anyone say different. Any visitor to Muff won't leave without popping into our T&S. Across the road from here is the beating heart of our village, the local bar, The Squealing Pig. Another family-run business, it is under the current family since 1989, but some sources say it dates back to the late 19th century. You will find a great pint of Guinness within and a real sense of Irishness with their open fire, stone floor and general character all around. No visit to Muff is complete with a visit to 'the Pig'!! Hospitality has always featured very high in our village of Muff. We like to welcome people from all corners of the world, and we are very fortunate to welcome folk

you will see fun and colour at the opening parade, music and craic over the weekend, family activities throughout the 4-day celebration. From 'bonny babies' to 'glamorous grannies', 'bake-off' to 'fun races', various sporting events and more; there really is something for everyone at this time. And this year the fun is happening from Friday 30th July to Monday 3rd August. A weekend well worth visiting our village for.

Our most recent addition to the hospitality of our village is the delight that is The Muff Liquor experience. Founded in 2017 as a brand (Gin, Vodka and Whiskey), the village centre opened its doors in the summer of 2024 with a visit on the day by one of it's renowned investors Mr Russel Crowe. Crowe travelled to Muff for the opening and saw the world media congregate right here on that day. Other investors include Ronan Keating, Ed Sheerin, Nathan Carter alongside many more.

I asked founder and CEO of the Muff Liquor Company what the visitors centre in Muff has to offer its American tourists. She proudly told me: "It's hugely important to us to welcome American visitors to the Muff Liquor Company experience in Muff. There's a real connection there, so many people in the US have Irish roots, and when they come here, we want them to feel that sense of home, story and spirit.

The centre in Muff isn't just about tasting spirits, it's about experiencing the brand in a very real, personal way. Visitors get to step into our world, hear the story behind Muff Liquor, see how everything is created, and most importantly, have a bit of fun and cocktails.

For us, it's about creating a memorable stop on their journey through Ireland, the most northerly part something they'll talk about long after they go home."

As you leave the village of Muff you will find our coffee stop at Claire The Bakers where the once 'horsebox' will serve you up coffee and treats as you continue on your journey in the most Northerly part of Ireland.

As you travel through Ireland and venture along the Wild Atlantic Way, remember to stop and take in the hospitality attractions that this small village of Muff has to offer. We are more than the jokes people make of us, we are a welcoming community and ensure everyone who visits takes a little piece of our village away with them.

Check out more of Muff at 'Craic On Muff' or 'Muff Community Forum' on Facebook.

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lunch and tasty bites, or just spend some time alone, the coffee shop that is Tank & Skinny's. This delight opened it's doors in Muff village back in 2016, and fast became the

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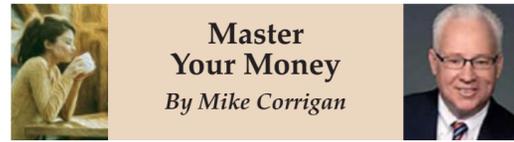
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Crucial Retirement & Financial Topics

There are difference makers that impact just surviving versus thriving in retirement. Retirement planning is full of advice, but how much of it actually applies to you? And how do you know when you, personally, are ready to retire? If you've come across so-called "hacks" to lower your taxes or one-size-fits-all investment strategies, you might be getting misleading information. The truth is, your

goals, timelines, and plans for tools and navigating rules to maintain your standard of living after working. Financial retirement planning involves investments and savings vehicles: IRA, 401(k) Roths, Pensions, Annuities, Life Insurance, Investment Accounts, Savings Accounts, CDs, etc. How these vehicles factor into your retirement plans is critical & something you need to get



retirement plan should be as unique as you are. We strive to cut through the noise and dive into the essential frameworks that will help you build a financial strategy tailored to your goals, your timeline, and your future so you can understand when making the move to retirement could make sense for you.

Your retirement strategy is one of the most important aspects of your life—it underpins your entire life during your retirement. But it's not easy to keep up with the changing financial landscape in addition to your own situation. And doing it wrong could cost you your life's work in saving for your golden years. So, if you want to make sure you get the most out of those years, you need to have a plan and working with a trustworthy professional will make a huge difference.

Everyone needs a coach. Michael Jordan had several coaches helping him master his game. Tiger Woods had multiple coaches. One for driving the ball, one for chipping and one for putting. The point is, as good as you think you are, trying to do it by yourself risks a higher probability for failure. So, get help!

Retirement isn't just about having a savings—it's about having a plan. The financial world changes constantly, and unexpected life events can throw even the best-laid plans off course. How do you stay ahead? How do you build stability into your retirement strategy so that you're more prepared for the unexpected? Let's break it down.

Studies found that 52% of respondents plan to retire AFTER age 65 or not retire at all. Approximately 33% of Americans reported having to use their retirement savings during the 2020-2021 economic shakeup... So, how do you achieve retirement readiness amidst uncertainty? Retirement readiness involves clearly defined

expenses, and more. What are the pros and cons of different retirement savings vehicles? Which ones for which unique situations? Provide hypothetical examples. How can one balance their desire for a comfortable retirement with the need to manage potential healthcare costs and unforeseen expenses? In light of recent or upcoming economic changes, how should one adjust their retirement plan to ensure retirement readiness?

This may seem overwhelming for some, but the good news is there is help and guidance, so you don't have to go it alone. You need a "financial doctor" to get a check up to see what your financial status is. Find out if everything is okay. Or if there are some blind spots you didn't realize you had that need some remedies to put you on a healthy track. You need to have a financial picture (like an x ray) to see where you are at.

It is too important to wait until you're just a few years away from wanting to retire. You may have more questions than answers as your approach the "back nine" of life. Our office is available to provide you assistance in assessing your financial situation.

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Roaming in the Gloaming

By Estelle Shanley

According to information published in the *Dundalk Democrat* in January there are 1,000 children waiting on child and adolescent mental health service appointments in the Dublin-northeast area.

The figures show how the Dublin-northeast has the third highest overall waiting list with 190 children

Daffodil Day in Ireland

Daffodil Day is the Irish Cancer Society's biggest annual fundraiser, taking place annually in March (e.g., March 20, 2026) to raise funds for cancer research, patient care, and support services. Volunteers nationwide sell daffodil pins, while supporters hold coffee mornings and events to "turn the country yellow".

Key facts about Daffodil Day include:

- It raises crucial funds for services like night nursing care, transport for patients to treatments, and cancer research.

As the first flower of spring, the daffodil represents hope, new beginnings, and the fight against cancer.

Donations are collected on streets, in shopping centers, and the Irish Cancer Society website CANCEL.IE. It is a vital funding source, as the Society receives little government funding and aims to raise millions for support services,



Cancer survivor, Paula Carroll, formerly with Ashford Castle

Murchu added that the mental health commission's report in 2024 into camhs, highlighted a number of issues with the service, including lost of monitoring psychiatric medicines, and unacceptable waiting times for high issues and risk referrals.

Many more operational care continues to exist with children receiving a lower quality of care. Children with a dual diagnosis of mental ill health and an intellectual disability are falling through the cracks as are neurodiverse children. There has been a consultant for Louth-Meath mental health services appointed but the team is not up and running at this point, and needs to happen as soon as possible. Parents, children and stakeholders have been highlighting the crisis in children's mental health which has gotten worse under the current government.

TD Murchu issued a statement that the government has to get serious about tackling the waiting lists for the vital care for children and young people. There needs to be campaign and sustained recruitment. Sinn fein has already been notified.

Rosary Groups in Schools
Christine O'Hara is a maths and religion teacher in an all boy's secondary school in Cork City. In 2022 after joining a Catholic whatsapp group she was surprised to find out that one of the teachers was thinking of starting a rosary group in her school.

Christine decided to ask her principal for permission to introduce something similar in her school and to her delight he gave her the green light. While one might think a rosary might not be warmly welcomed by a group of teenage boys, to Christine's delight the rosary groups took off with huge numbers embracing it, and speaking of feeling calm and warmth in their hearts.

The success of Christine's rosary group has made headlines around the world with religious documentary from the USA covering the story last year.

Rosary Revolution
Meanwhile Christine O'Hara who lives in County Louth where I was born is hoping the success of the Rosary Groups can be replicated across the country. Recently she spoke to the *Dundalk Leader* Newspaper and encouraged teachers in Louth to embrace the idea and give students a chance to find peace and inner strength through the Rosary.

Meanwhile the teacher has been presently surprised by the response she received from the boys. She teaches in a Secondary school called St Francis College.

The feedback from parents has been positive and students report they have been helped with school work and mentally and are in a better place.

Christine noted that being a teenager can be a confusing and a hard time. "I think when they are in the Rosary group they feel love and know they are loved by GOD. Christine noted there are senior and junior students in schools and some teachers might think it would be a hard sell to introduce a Rosary group. "Not so, teachers will be surprised at just how receptive students will be to it". She hopes Rosary Groups will spread across the country.

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Chelsea Hoy Named Co-Artistic Director of Trinity Irish Dance Company

Founding Artistic Director Mark Howard Announced Chelsea Hoy as Co-Artistic Director On Stage at Chicago's Auditorium After 12 Years of Dedication and Transformative Leadership

CHICAGO - On Saturday, Feb. 28, Trinity Irish Dance Company (TIDC) Founding Artistic Director Mark Howard stepped onto the stage of The Auditorium in Chicago amidst Act Two of the company's 35th Anniversary home season celebration and revealed the ultimate surprise in front of thousands.

Chelsea Hoy, TIDC's Associate Artistic Director for the past eight years, dancer, and budding co-choreographer, was reintroduced to an ecstatic audience as the company's Co-Artistic Director.

At age 30, she has become one of the youngest artistic directors in the performing arts industry. Howard welcomed Hoy to the stage following a short video that teased a full-length public television documentary that is in the works, celebrating the company's trailblazing legacy and major milestones of its 35th year. "Although I'll be doing this for the next couple of decades and my best work is certainly ahead of me, it's time to share the artistic director role with this level of talent. Chicago - you have no idea what you're in store for in the coming years," shared Howard.

At the Auditorium, for the first time, the screen behind them revealed an updated TIDC logo, with the byline evolving to read "Artistic Directors Mark Howard & Chelsea Hoy." The audience and backstage crew and dancers erupted into cheers as the



Company - as a trailblazing force for our cultural form and as an authentic community for artists to evolve - is deeply important to me. Mark created his own movement genre, a bold vision that altered the landscape of Irish dance worldwide and one that continues to carve the path for what's next. He has an uncanny ability to create what's new, what's next, what's fresh and I'm thrilled to realize new dreams together," shares Hoy.



stunned Hoy humbly accepted the prolonged applause before taking her place to begin a particularly powerful performance of the piece 'Push'. "Although Chelsea speaks in soft tones, there is a great power to her. Chelsea forces the room to lean in, ever closer in order to hear her wise beyond her years words. So, we lean in and have all been richly rewarded for it. She is a game changer for our company and Chicago's vibrant and expanding arts scene," shares Howard. "The legacy of Trinity Irish Dance

became enraptured with TIDC at just nine years old when her aunt brought her and her sister to see the company in Beaver Creek, CO.

After training and teaching at the Wick School of Irish Dance in Denver, Hoy moved to Chicago in 2013 to attend Loyola University Chicago and began creating and performing with TIDC.

She showed immediate leadership from her first tour of Japan, connecting with each artist. Hoy and Howard have been partnering to revitalize the

organization and enchant audiences for the past 12 years, expanding on TIDC's international reputation as the most innovative and forward-thinking Irish dance company in the world.

A dynamic choreographer, performer, activist and organizational leader, she is proud to join Howard at the forefront of evolving this cultural form with integrity and innovation. Primarily a female company since inception, this equal billing of leadership is representative of TIDC's longstanding celebration of women who bring the thunder.

Despite her relative youth, Hoy has helped shape and co-choreograph significant TIDC works, and has been celebrated as both dancer and choreographer at prestigious institutions from Chicago to Tokyo, including Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival and The Joyce Theater in the last year alone.

Days after her announcement, Hoy traveled to New York to choreograph and perform a work at the 2026 Uptown Rhythm Dance Festival (part of the 'Women Move the World' series) at the 92nd Street Y.

Trinity Irish Dance Company continues to gain acclaim and momentum as they advance Howard's distinctive movement genre of "Progressive Irish Dance." Their 35th Anniversary Season alone brought Irish dance to places it's never been before - from the Museum of Contemporary Art to Jacob's Pillow, making TIDC the first full program of Irish dance to be presented on the Ted Shawn Theatre stage.

TIDC allows Irish dance to grow and transform for contemporary audiences while maintaining a strong connection to its ancestral roots. Celebrated by critics and audiences around the world as an international treasure, TIDC continues to forge new traditions as it expands the possibilities of this cherished and historic art form.

Critical Dance writer Jerry Hochman, reviewing the recent Joyce Theater

performance wrote "If you haven't finalized your plans for the next few days, or even if you have, stop what you're doing and beg, borrow or steal a ticket. They're that good, and that much fun to watch...these dancers perform with a level of youthful and engaging enthusiasm that's both contagious and intoxicating."

Marina Kennedy, reviewing the same performance for Broadway World praised the company for presenting "a stunning program of groundbreaking dance" featuring "awe-inspiring talent" and recognizing the "exquisite versatility" of the dancers.



Trinity Irish Dance Company **Chelsea Hoy and Mark Howard** praised the company for presenting "a stunning program of groundbreaking dance" featuring "awe-inspiring talent" and recognizing the "exquisite versatility" of the dancers.

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Negotiating An Ancient Conflict

This penetrating and insightful account by former Maine Senator George Mitchell chronicling his role in brokering the historic April 10th, 1998 Good Friday Agreement is not only a masterclass in conflict resolution but also a highly intimate personal account. It is like having a front row seat to history while illuminating the painstaking task Mitchell undertook as Special Envoy to the North that led after two and a half years of intense negotiations to the cobbling together of the historic agreement. I absolutely loved this book. It is a valuable piece of living history - and the task Mitchell undertook was prodigious. He calls it "the most difficult task I have undertaken."

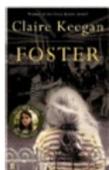
Mitchell's first post in Northern Ireland was in 1995 when he was appointed Special Advisor to President Clinton on economic initiatives in the North. His Conference on Trade and Investment there was a success-- he thought he would never be back again. His time there gave him an understanding of the people. He was well liked by both Catholics and Protestants and grew fond of the people,

"Perhaps because they have seen so much death, they love life. They are warm and generous and have an earthy sense of humor. They love to eat and drink and they love to talk even more; how they love to talk!"

When appointed Special Envoy for the Peace Process, Mitchell traveled back and forth to preside over negotiations involving two governments - London and Dublin and 10 political parties to end centuries of conflict. It took 4 months just to get an agreed on agenda - and 9 months had passed with almost no progress made. And after meeting for a year and a half-- very little progress had been made.

Mitchell experienced strong

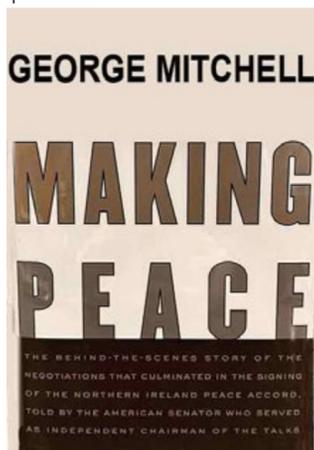
resistance to his role as Chair of the talks from two of the unionist party leaders who stormed out in protest that an American was chosen to preside



Books Under Review
By Sabina Clarke



over them--lan Paisley, Leader of the Democratic Unionist Party was most volatile in his objection. This was Mitchell's first test-- his baptism of fire; he remained calm and eventually prevailed.



From the outset, Mitchell made a promise to all parties that he would listen to anything they had to say and they could talk as long as they wanted--which he came to regret since he often had to listen to the same speeches over and over for hours on end. The talks were endless into the late nights and often interspersed with highly entertaining behind the

scenes drama-- warring parties shouting accusations at each other and constant dramatic walk-outs by disgruntled participants. "I wondered how I could get them to agree on anything of substance when they couldn't even agree to sit together in the same room."

As Chairman, he had to coddle, cajole and patiently listen to all the dissenting Northern Ireland parties -their ancient grudges, their laundry lists of grievances and their dramatic walkouts while doing a balancing act between the two governments. Mitchell comes across as likable, humble and impartial -- and possessing a good sense of humor and the patience of Job--the perfect pick for this incredibly complex role as arbiter of an intractable conflict. One of his strongest assets is his listening skills:

"I've been told I am a good listener; I got plenty of practice in Northern Ireland. For the two years of negotiations, I listened and listened. And then I listened some more. At times, it was interesting; at times it was entertaining. It was often repetitive, frustrating and deliberately quarrelsome. For hundreds and hundreds of hours, I listened to the same arguments over and over." And he laughs recalling this.

Complicating the talks were the differences in goals-- the unionists wanted a continuation of the union keeping Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom with a strong majority running the Northern Ireland Assembly and the nationalists wanted just the opposite-- a united Ireland with North and South joined together in a single sovereign state.

All of this against the backdrop of the continuing threat of violence

and daily threats of escalation which added to the urgency of reaching an agreement--since the Mitchell Principles--a commitment to democracy and non-violence-- were initially set forth as a requirement for all parties to participate in the talks.

Finally, on April 10, 1998 the historic Good Friday Agreement was ratified by all parties and both governments. For Mitchell it was, "The realization of a dream that sustained me for three and a half years, the longest most difficult years of my life." I remember the day well. My friend the center city Philadelphia attorney John Corcoran had a copy of the Good Friday Agreement delivered to me at work.

Months later, on the morning of October 16th, when the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize was announced, there was a feeling of disbelief among us that Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams was not included. Later in the day, I attended an event hosting Adams at the Union League in Philadelphia sponsored by the World Affairs Council. When in response to the question on everyone's mind he said, "Peace was the prize" - you knew that he meant it. It was a powerful moment.

George Mitchell's dream of ending an intractable conflict is now replaced by a new dream, he confides. His new dream is to take his young son Andrew to Northern Ireland "one of the most beautiful landscapes on earth" and watch the Northern Ireland Assembly at Stormont Castle in session discussing mundane topics on the day that peace is taken for granted.

Postscript: As a result of former Senator George Mitchell being named in the Epstein files more than 300 times there has been significant fallout. Mitchell's legacy has been tarnished. He resigned from the Mitchell Institute and his name has been removed from scholarships. Queen's University in Belfast removed the bust in his honor.

future generations.

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<https://saoirsebook-vip.manus.space>, our collection offers an accessible and engaging way for history enthusiasts, diaspora members, and visitors to Ireland to delve into this defining era. To ensure our readers can experience the quality of our work, we offer free first-chapter previews for all our titles, with full ebooks priced accessibly between £9.99 and £19.99.

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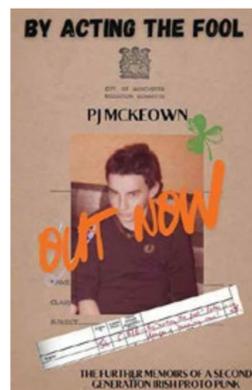
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THE IRISH BOOK CLUB.COM

By Acting the Fool: Further Memoirs of a 2nd Generation Irish Proto Punk

By PJ McKeown
Inspired by his English teacher writing the comment 'By acting the fool Peter is in danger of becoming one!' on his school report. McKeown has produced volume two of his memoirs in the style of a 1970s school report book with the very remark splashed across the front cover.

But the punk gurus Brogan and Phelan in his art class at school reckon that because PJ is still so into 1960s music, he isn't a full Punk - he is only a Pod - half Punk half Mod. And they should know, because they are "proper punks." PJ says he doesn't care anyway.



Born in 1965, PJ McKeown describes himself as "a never to get out of the garage punk rocker, an alternative to the alternative comedian, an obscure radio presenter, a failed playwright and a nearly man social sciences lecturer."

He has always been the author of his own downfall. He claims to have invented a new genre of writing 'Mirthsery,' a cross between humour and misery.

Here in the follow up to 'My Generation: Memoirs of a 2nd Generation Irish Wimpy Kid' he produces volume two of his autobiography 'By Acting the Fool: The further memoirs of a 2nd Generation Irish Proto Punk.' But here PJ is no longer just a kid, he is a human juke box of a boy, and he soon has the fire of Punk in his belly.

It's 1976 and PJ has a problem. He is an 11-year-old mod, ever since *The Who* brought out their life-affirming album *Quadrophenia* in 1973.

Some of the lads at his new secondary school don't like his Mick Jagger haircut. Mods are seen as a particularly British youth culture, but after we are introduced to his Irish Anarcho-Syndicalist dad and his crypto - Phalangist mum we are reminded that the Manchester-born PJ is indeed Irish and proud. Or "eye-rish" as they say it in his city. It's the 1970s and 'The Troubles' loom over their lives like a dark cloud. Every time there is a "spectacular" the anti-Irish racism and insults rear their ugly heads again.

Tony Wilson, John Peel and his own brother-in-law Mark introduce PJ to punk music. Johnny Rotten is second-generation Irish, and so PJ is a punk too, Elvis Costello is of Irish descent and so PJ is a fan. PJ tells his mum that The Banshees are an Irish folk band so that she allows him to go and see their concert.

His best mate and neighbour, JJ, doesn't give a damn either. PJ and JJ aren't cynics (yet). They are both mad for Manchester United and for playing football on 'the field' with the rest of The Cheetham Boys. They are also in love with Reggae, Hank Williams, Ska music and glasses of mild. But JJ doesn't like PJ's new friends from the Grammar School, and PJ can't work out why.

Together they discover crime, ales, vomit, discos, gigs and girls. They are as thick as thieves. Obviously, they have their ups and downs, but you couldn't tear them apart.

At both home and school, PJ proves to be a protagonist and gadfly to those in authority. He borrows the coping strategies of Corporal King in King Rat to navigate the journey through Grammar School, an institution that he sees as some kind of POW camp. Some of the teachers think that he is too clever for his own good, but he knows that he isn't particularly intelligent. He just has five older siblings, so he borrows their sayings, their books, their records, their clothes and even their friends.

McKeown guides us through the great dichotomy of him having the craic on the mean streets of multi-cultural Cheetham, and in the green

fields of mono-cultural Galway.

With a sharp adolescent mind, he analyses, devours and internalises the rise and fall of Punk and Ska music, the political battles of the late 1970s and early 1980s, in a work that Roddy Doyle would have been proud to produce, if his parents had emigrated in the 1940s.

Like Iggy Pop, he has a lust for life.

Co-starring in this chaos are his close and extended family, The Who, all the great Punk bands, The Rolling Stones, vicious teachers, and lovely girls.

PJ and JJ stand together; they are "mad for it" as they battle against convention, corporal punishment, sectarianism, as well as crazy gangs from Broughton and Collyhurst.

Solo, he continues to battle an undiagnosed stomach problem whilst he rallies against flared trousers, school bullies, an innate tendency for anarchy and exhibitionism, bad eyesight, the law, "rawk music," consumerism and a violent mother.

McKeown paints a truly colourful picture of a life full of laughter, anguish, comradeship and betrayal in equal measures.

It's a powerful recipe, and each enthralling slice of proto-punk nostalgia is served up with a dollop of irreverence and with plenty of sociology baked into the recipe.

You don't have to have a drop of Celtic blood in you, and it doesn't matter which football teams you may support, to be entertained, nay captivated, charmed, and even overwhelmed, by McKeown, as he drags you kicking and screaming by the ass of your recently taken in ex flared trousers and into and through a riot of his own.

When I asked him why his book was in A4 size he replied

"So that it looks like a school report book, the demographic of the readership calls for large print, it's a textbook for life, like my life story it won't blend in snugly with the other memoirs on the shelf, and so it won't fit in your luggage- as it is certainly no sunny holiday read"

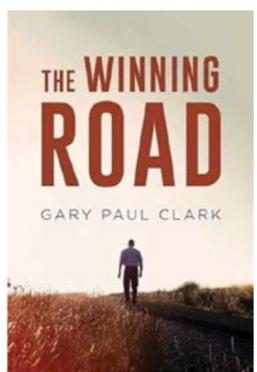
Spiro Biro Poet and Literary Editor of Bifocal Fanzine January 2026

The Winning Road Paperback

By Gary Paul Clark
5 out of 5 stars

From Boston to Cork: A Baseball Star's Journey to His Roots, Unearthing Family Secrets & Reviving a Legacy. Love, Bravery & Family Values Interwoven. The Winning Road takes readers on a stirring journey from the bustling American city to the tranquil Irish countryside, exploring the life of Patrick, a young baseball prodigy. As he navigates the pressures

Patrick is drawn back to Ireland, embarking on a transformative solo trip. The heritage he uncovers and the legacy he revives, take him on an unexpected path, forcing him to confront his familial past and contemplate his future. The story is a testament to the power of family, the courage it takes to believe in oneself, and the value of taking risks. As Patrick uncovers his father's untold history, he also discovers a side of himself previously unknown. The tale is beautifully interspersed with elements of romance, adding a layer of warmth and passion to the narrative. The Winning Road is more than just a story of self-discovery, it's a tale about the strength of familial bonds, the importance of heritage, and the resilience of the human spirit. It's a story that will resonate with anyone who has ever questioned their path, unearthing deep truths about the importance of understanding one's roots to truly appreciate their journey forward. A compelling narrative full of love, bravery, and family values, The Winning Road is a captivating tale that holds the power to inspire, provoke thought, and stir the soul. It's a heartwarming testament to the enduring power of family, the courage of self-belief, and the strength it takes to walk the path less traveled.



of breaking into the Major Leagues with the Red Sox, Patrick feels a calling to delve deeper into his roots. His father, Pdraig O'Sullivan, was once a star road bowler in County Cork but met a disappointing fall from grace in the All Ireland finals. Fleeing from the mockery and shame, Pdraig immigrated to Boston, leaving his past behind.

Twenty-five years later,

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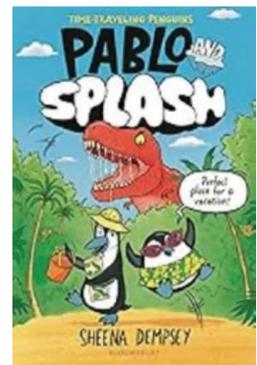
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Much More Than Leprechauns
By Sheryl O'Sullivan

Welcome back to the enchanting land of Tir na N'Og for books! This month we are looking at two recent Irish children's books that are graphic novels. Graphic novels have gotten very popular everywhere, and Ireland is no exception. You and I might think of them as comic books, and they do share some similar features with these books. Just like comics, the action is presented in little panels with gutters between them. They have word and thought bubbles to convey most of the text, though there may sometimes be some separate narration. Most of the story, though, is presented in the pictures which must then have things like motion lines and be very detailed and descriptive.

In our youth, we were probably told comic books had no value, but graphic novels can be very valuable because they share elements with picture books, novels, film and poetry. The graphic novel can be excellent or not depending on the creative team, and the two books we are exploring this month are both excellent.



PABLO AND SPLASH
This graphic novel, by author/illustrator Sheena Dempsey, features time-traveling penguins and is aimed at middle-grade readers—perhaps second through fourth-graders.

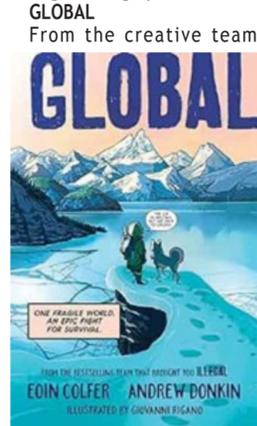
Pablo is the sensible penguin who always thinks ahead and likes planning. Splash, on the other hand wears a wild scarf and hat and gets into lots of trouble. The two of them will remind you of lots of couples you know.

The two penguins live in Antarctica, but they are tired of the frigid climate. They want to go on a sun holiday. As luck would have it, they meet up with Professor O'Brain and her TimeBender machine. This machine will not only move them to a warmer place, but will take them to a warmer time. Using this machine, the

two penguins end up in the Cretaceous time of dinosaurs. As you would expect with two penguins from Antarctica trying to get by in prehistoric times, they have many hilarious adventures which make the most of their different personalities. They return safely, though, so it is all a good romp setting the stage for Pablo and Splash to become a series.

The writing is very whimsical and funny with lots of fishy/penguin puns and jokes, like eating krill pops, or having a mind like a razor clam. The illustrations are bold, humorous and engaging. The whole book has lots of true facts about penguins, dinosaurs and prehistoric times, and there is also a section at the back instructing kids how to draw penguins.

This book is a great introduction for your kids to a new series and also to the whole new genre of graphic novels.



GLOBAL
From the creative team (authors Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin and illustrator Giovanni Rigano) that brought kids the graphic novel, Illegal, about immigration issues, comes a new book about global warming called appropriately enough, Global. Though the topic of this graphic novel is a serious one, the story is exciting and kid-based.

The plot moves between two different tweens who are dealing with the effects of climate change in two very different places. Sami lives with his grandfather in a village on the Indian Ocean. His village is now routinely hit with cyclones and rising water. The fish that once kept them alive are harder and harder to find. Sami and his grandfather, along with the whole village need to move to higher ground with regularity. Sami is dealing with all of this, but is also on a personal quest to find his mother's lucky knife which has been lost in the ocean during an earlier cyclone.

The Original Rules of the Card Game '25'!

A newly republished 1870 rulebook preserves the earliest written rules of Irish trick-taking games.

First published in 1870, *The Pocket Guide to Spoil-Five, Twenty-Five, & Forty-Five* by Henry "Cavendish" Jones is the earliest known book devoted entirely to the rules of Irish trick-taking card games—including the game now commonly known as 25.

Jones (1831-1899) was one of the most influential authorities on games of the 19th century. Writing under the pen name Cavendish, he authored definitive guides to card and lawn games and was instrumental in shaping modern sports culture—most notably helping to establish Wimbledon and serving as its first official referee.

This newly republished edition presents Cavendish's original text in a faithful modern reproduction. Inside, readers will find detailed rules covering setup, dealing, play, robbing, and reneging, along with guidance on misdeals, illegal plays, and dispute resolution. Cavendish also provides historical context for these Irish games and offers strategic advice aimed at improving competitive play.

More than a rulebook, *The Pocket Guide to Spoil-Five, Twenty-Five, & Forty-Five* serves as a snapshot of how these games were played and understood in the 19th century. For longtime players, it offers a definitive reference; for newcomers, a direct link to the game's origins.

available at **amazon**
Get it now at: <https://amzn.to/4swmF8N>

Yuki and her dog live in Northern Canada inside the Arctic Circle where the melting of the polar ice is seen firsthand. Yuki's life is very different from Sami's, though. She has all the things modern teens will recognize—internet, cell phone, school. As she undertakes her personal quest to save a special bear known as a grolar, though, she leaves her comfortable home and places herself in direct danger from the melting ice and changing landscape.

As you would expect in a children's book, both quests end successfully and with hope for the future. However, there is nothing trite or simple about this hope. It is a clear call to action for tweens who long for a better world.

Just as with all graphic novels, the words are minimal with most thoughts conveyed in short text bubbles. The action is carried by the illustrations which fill every page and are truly remarkable. Readers can deeply examine each picture for more and more clues to the situations of Sami and Yuki. Reluctant readers will especially appreciate this dominance of pictures.

At the end of the book are several very informative pages about the geography in the book and some facts about global heating. There are also two pages of illustrator, Rigano's, sketchbook which show early drawings of the characters, setting and plot. Artistic kids will love these. As with many graphic novels, this book can cross many ages from late elementary to adult. You may find it just as engaging as your children.

That's it for this month. Keep enjoying those Irish authors and children's books!

FOR AND AGAINST A UNITED IRELAND
FINTAN O'TOOLE AND SAM MCBRIDE

"WE OWE IT TO EACH OTHER TO CONSIDER THESE ISSUES THOUGHTFULLY AND RESPECTFULLY. NOT EVERYONE WHO WENT BEFORE US HAD THIS CHANCE."
—FROM THE INTRODUCTION

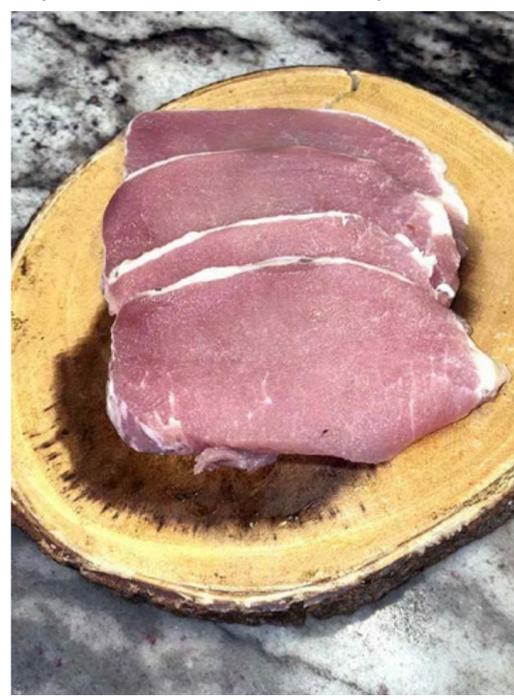
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME | NOTRE DAME PRESS

By Jim August

Thought for Food

Sus Domesticus or more commonly known as the pig, and the Irish have had a love affair for 9,000 years. Pig bones have been found in 4,000 year old Neolithic sites. The pig was held in very high status. It was considered the food of Chieftains and often buried with them. It was raised for consumption, and was the primary food of celebratory feasts. Pigs and wild boar migrated to Ireland when there was still a land bridge between the U.K. and Europe. The most common breed was the Irish Greyhound Razor Back until

pork collar or shoulder, boiled until tender and served with potatoes, cabbage and carrots, or root vegetables which were abundant and inexpensive back home. Times were tough and they found from their new friends in the Jewish community that you could substitute beef brisket for pork and end up with a similar product which was less expensive. The only corned beef available in Ireland comes in a tin. Back to pork. No matter where you travel in Ireland you will find an Irish breakfast. This usually consists of 2



it became extinct in the early 20th century. It was replaced by larger animals from Europe like the White Landrace. The 18th century saw the rise of pork as a commodity. Pork products from Limerick, Waterford, and Cork were being supplied on a global scale, especially to the British Royal Navy. Today the production of Irish pork is highly industrialized. Cured pork products like back bacon and boiling bacon are injected and pumped with a wet brine to speed up the curing process. Pork is the 3rd most significant sector of Irish food. And if you've ever been to Ireland, you know why. No part of the pig is wasted. From nose to tail every bit is used even the bones. When the Irish arrived in places like Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, they brought their cooking traditions and family recipes with. One was boiled bacon and cabbage. Brined

fried eggs, black and white pudding, bangers, (Irish sausages), grilled tomatoes, and mushrooms, baked beans, toast, marmalade, a good cup of tea, and Irish bacon. What do all the meat products have in common? They are all made with some form of pork. In Ireland the term bacon refers to various cuts of cured pork, as does gammon. After running an Irish Import shop for over 32 years I have sold thousands of pounds of Irish sausages, black and white pudding and Irish bacon. The texture and taste of these products are unique to Ireland with the Scots and the English having their own variations. Irish sausages are made with pork, rusk, a baked wheat type of bread crumb and milder spices. Black and white puddings are a type of sausage made with pork, oats, onions, and spices. Black pudding has

the addition of blood. Unlike the American style of bacon which is made from cured smoked pork bellies, Irish bacon is a meatier cut from the pork loin, cured but not smoked. All these breakfast meats are usually grilled under a broiler rather than being fried. I have made all of products with some success the easiest being the Irish bacon which is quite expensive to buy considering you can buy whole pork loins for around \$2 a pound at Costco. The only other ingredients are salt, sugar, and a little pink #1 cure salt to keep the meat from going grey, and a place in the refrigerator to cure for 1 week. If you like Irish bacon I would urge you to try this recipe. There are no special skills needed to create authentic Irish Rashers. I prefer to use a rub rather than a wet brine. Flavor wise I believe it results in a superior product.

Irish Bacon (Rashers)
Pork loin the ratio of salt, sugar and pink salt will vary by the weight of the pork loin. It is easier and more accurate to use a gram scale when weighing spices. The electronic ones are not very expensive and invaluable when measuring ingredients especially for baking. 1 pound equals 454 grams

- Salt 10 grams per pound
- Sugar 4grams per pound
- Pink salt #1 cure 1.5 grams per pound
- Zip lock bag

Mix the salts and sugar and rub on all sides of the pork loin. Place the pork loin in a zip lock bag big enough to hold the pork loin. Use two bags and cut the loin in half if it is too large. Place in the refrigerator and turn and massage every other day. After 1 week remove loin from the bag and rinse off remaining brine. Pat dry and freeze for 2 hours to make it easier to slice. Slice into 3/16inch slices and grill under a hot broiler until fat on the edges starts to brown. Serve on a burger, in a B L T with Irish Cheddar, cut into pieces on a salad, on a roll with butter, with eggs as part of a breakfast, or anywhere you would use bacon.

If you want to go old school you can brine a pork collar or shoulder, boil it and serve it with cabbage, potatoes, carrots, and parsley sauce like corned beef. I've even had a roasted brined loin once in Donegal. It was excellent. Your friends and family will be blown away by how good your Irish bacon is, and won't believe that you actually made it from scratch. I think I'm going to have some myself tonight for dinner.

GETTING TO KNOW THE IRISH!
By Tina Butler - Leonard

Who was Luke Kelly? (1940-1984) He was a folk singer from Dublin. His hairstyle was similar to the calm TV painter Bob Ross. He is regarded as one of the most iconic & influential folk singers of his genre. He also played the long-neck banjo. A friend of mine asked, "Is the banjo an Irish thing"? Yes, it is very popular in traditional folk music. The banjo plays the melody line for jigs, reels and hornpipes note for note. My brother-in-law Pat is currently taking lessons for the banjo. Kelly co-founded the band The Dubliners. He was the lead vocalist for 20 years. (The Dubliners had a 50-year career) The original band members included Ronnie Drew, Barney McKenna, Ciaran Bourke, Sean Cannon and John Sheahn. The Dubliners were an iconic folk group that wanted to rejuvenate traditional folk songs. They were a global sensation they toured the world, U.S.A, Germany, Denmark, South Africa, etc.

Kelly has been described by The Irish Post as one of Ireland's greatest folk singers. He definitely had the presence of a born singer, some people are just born with certain talents, and he was one of a kind. He had the passion, commitment & confidence to entertain a crowd. On occasion he would express his political views in his music, which included workers' rights, nationalism, Irish travelers and just basic civil rights.

Kelly left school at a young age and worked at several odd jobs to make ends meet. Kelly started busking. He would perform on streets hoping to get noticed that way. He isn't alone in busking, Ed Sheeran an English singer and guitarist also started out busking.

Kelly's father was also named Luke. It was a little surprising to me because when we were growing up, we were told its bad luck to name your first son after the father. It's customary to name your first-born son after the paternal grandfather.

The legendary musician, songwriter and producer Phil Coulter was for a time the manager of The Dubliners. A memorable performance by Kelly on the RTE TV show, The McCann Man where he sang "Scorn Not His Simplicity", a

song about Phil's son who had down syndrome.

Other big hits Kelly sang include "On Raglan Road". On Raglan Road was actually a poem written by the poet Patrick Kavanagh from Co. Monaghan. "The Town I loved so Well" and "Whiskey in the Jar". Sadly, Kelly passed away at 43 from a brain tumor. Shane



Luke Kelly as seen in the heart of Dublin, near the Beckett Bridge

MacGowan deeply admired Kelly as I am sure many other singers did.

In 2019 a Luke Kelly stamp came out that said, On Raglan Road. There are a few bars named in his honor which include Luke Kelly's Bar in New York (however it recently closed) and in Spain also named, Luke Kelly's Bar.

Kelly's contribution to Irish music has been described as enormous, a cultural touchstone. The Ballybough Bridge in Dublin was renamed the Luke Kelly Bridge. A bronze statue of Luke Kelly's head is in Luke Kelly Park in Dublin. There is a yearly Luke Kelly Festival in Smithfield Square, Dublin.

"The light music of whiskey falling into glasses made an agreeable interlude."

James Joyce
"Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you"

Gospel of Luke
"Do to others what you would have them do to you."

Gospel of Luke
Smidin Gaeilge:
Folk music-ceol tìre, singer-amhranaí, banjo-bainseo

I recently read, Frightened Pilgrim an Autographical Memoir by author James Mallon from Co. Armagh. A moving, incredible story of hardship and determination. Thank you for reaching out, James.

If you have questions, email Molanive@yahoo.com

2025 Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards

By Sharon Smith Ibertle

For many years, the Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards (formerly known as American Celtic Listener Supported Radio Awards) have honored those who have impressed radio hosts and listeners with the excellence of their music.

The Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards acknowledges the exceptional talents, achievements, integrity, and unwavering determination of musicians whose focus and performance is Celtic Traditional music. By bestowing this award, it is our intent to facilitate the exposure, promotion and celebration of these artists and their music.

2025 proved to be an incredible year for new music. Each month brought new and fabulous music to the table and made it very difficult to choose the 2025 Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards. With the help of our listeners, we have awarded the Ireland Tonight Music Awards to the following:

The 2025 Ireland Tonight Radio Music Awards have been presented to the following:

ALBUM OF THE YEAR:

Ryan Molloy & Fergal Scahill - The Gannet's Dive DEBUT ALBUM OF THE YEAR:

Enda Scahill and Joel Andersson - The Dark Well MALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR:

Dave Curley for Fanore

FEMALE VOCALIST OF THE YEAR:

Jenn Butterworth for Her by Design

Female Musicians of the Year:

Cassie and Maggie MacDonald for Gold and Coal

Volunteers of the Year:

Ed Lesniak



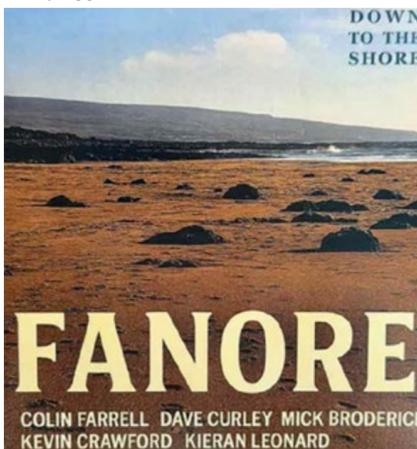
this has never been put together before and this album is truly one of a kind. Beginning with the first track which is a march you eagerly await the next tune and are not disappointed. Enda Scahill combines a unique and extraordinary skill that elevates the music to an experience. His unique style provides us with toe tapping and brings us fun. He is truly inventive and a pro at banjo playing.

Joel Andersson a highly gifted musician brings his harmonica and the relationship with the banjo is developed. The harmonica is expressive and versatile. Joel Andersson with his harmonica bring personality to each track

Joel bridges the gap between banjo and harmonica. Together the banjo and harmonica bring a sense of experience and expertise that allows the music to be fun and full of personality. Enda and Joel are masters of their craft - putting the banjo and harmonica together was brilliant.

The Ireland Tonight 2025 Radio Music Award for the Debut Album goes to Enda Scahill and Joel Andersson for their album The Dark Well.

DAVE CURLEY

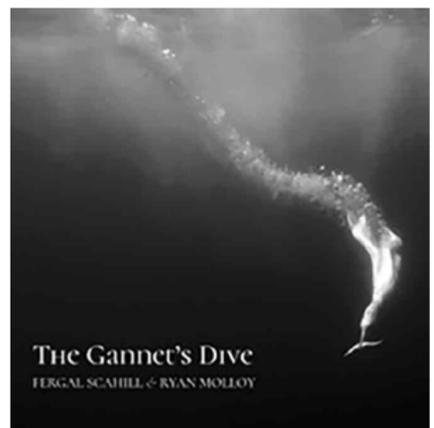


Dave Curley is a multi-instrumentalist and his soft melodic vocals makes the songs come alive on the album Fanore.

Dave is a gifted singer and his velvet vocals easily tell the story in each song that he sings whether it is in the Fanore album as well as at any event.

Down to the Shore is an original by Dave and is not only featured on the album but also on Colin Farrell's Music on his tune for a day during 2025. Dave tells the story of those that went on the ship and traveled across the ocean, and who are left behind at home.

Whether you are listening to Down to the Shore or to Highland Paddy where he is telling the story of those fighting for freedom or Shores of Lough Bran, where he is telling you the story of those who leave their home and how they hope to help out mom and dad and their feelings of missing home, you automatically stop what you are doing and listen to that great voice tell you the story. Dave tells each story with his focus on the story itself - it is clear and soft and you know that you are listening to a beautiful voice and an experienced story teller.



Sherri Stone Weigman THE GANNET'S DIVE by Ryan Molloy and Fergal Scahill

The gannet is a distinctive white bird with a yellow head and black wingtips that is known for its superfast fishing dives into the sea. You will see them off of the coast of Ireland and from approx. 98 feet high and at 90 mph, dive into the water to catch fish. A remarkable feat. The album The Gannet's Dive is appropriately named. The fiddle and piano create a story that unfolds in each track. The title track gives you the feeling of watching and waiting for the right moment to dive and the following tracks provide the actual dive and catch. This amazing album is both lively and captivating. Ryan Molloy and Fergal Scahill provide a fabulous listen.

Ryan Molloy is an incredibly talented pianist and this is evident when you listen to the Gannet's Dive. Fergal is a brilliant fiddle player and together their experience on the fiddle and piano bring the listener much enjoyment

The Gannet's Dive is a fascinating and elegant album.

The Ireland Tonight 2025 Radio Music Award for Album of the Year goes to Fergal Scahill and Ryan Molloy for The Gannet's Dive.

The Dark Well by Enda Scahill and Joel Andersson

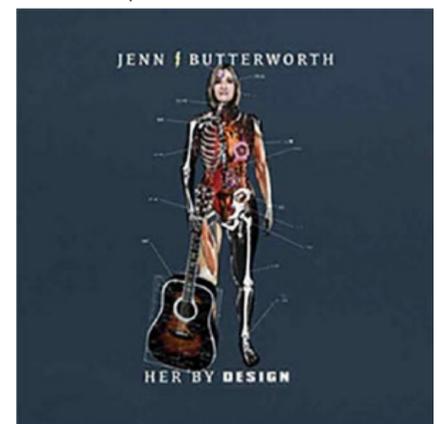
The album The Dark Well by Enda Scahill and Joel Andersson bring you to an album that is fun, toe tapping and a bit out of the ordinary. Combining the banjo and harmonica is a first,

The Ireland Tonight 2025 Radio Music Award for Best Male Vocalist goes to Dave Curley for the album Fanore.

JENN BUTTERWORTH

Jenn Butterworth's album Her by Design is her debut album and it is captivating. Her album illustrates the support that she has for women, as we hear her sing about a lost love, an illness, falling in love, or a housewives lament - how it was a long time ago or an unfaithful love. She is a champion for women in all aspects of a women's life and this is brought out throughout the album.

Jenn's voice is engaging and she sings each song with passion and you can tell that she celebrates women's independence. Her voice is beautiful and

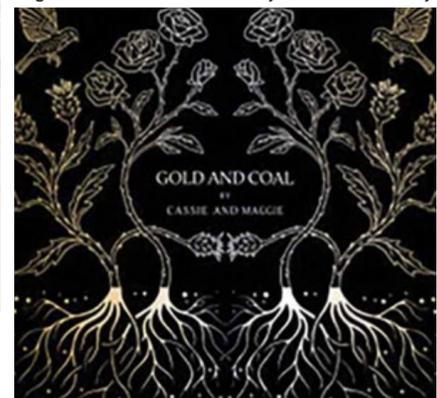


the story is delivered.

The Ireland Tonight 2025 Radio Music Award for Best Female Vocalist goes to Jenn Butterworth for the album Her by Design.

CASSIE & MAGGIE MACDONALD - GOLD AND COAL Cassie and Maggie MacDonald are siblings that make an impression immediately while listening to their Gold and Coal album. This is an album that represents their musical journey with Coal symbolizing the past and is the foundation that they stand on and Gold symbolizing the future.

Maggie is the lead vocalist and plays the acoustic guitar and Cassie provides the vocal harmony and plays the fiddle and together you get a powerhouse of great music. Their musicality is incredible - they



are playing to and for the audience. They connect with the listeners and the listeners automatically respond.

Cassie and Maggie MacDonald are incredibly talented and the stories that they share with us are about life, life in the past and how hard things were especially if you were a miner. The stories about the future gives one hope but beware, you must always be aware and not let anything get the best of you. Cassie and Maggie have written the majority of the music and lyrics, their talent knows no bounds.

Gold and Coal is an album that fascinates us with stories and captures our attention with the music provided. This album is one of a kind by two extraordinary musicians.

The Ireland Tonight 2025 Radio Music Award for Best Female musicians goes to Cassie and Maggie MacDonald for their album Gold and Coal.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR:

There are a number of people that work together to create a weekly radio program. The Ireland Tonight Radio program has personnel from WDCB working behind the scenes to ensure that the program airs regularly, and we have listeners that provide feedback on what they like and do not like. All of this is taken into consideration to create Ireland Tonight.

We also have people that volunteer their time to add their expertise to the show. The definition of a volunteer is one who is willing to participate and share their knowledge and experiences with the audience, as well as creating numerous opportunities to share information.

This year, we have two volunteers



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that always go above and beyond. They are Ed Lesniak and Sherri Stone Weigman. Ed and Sherri are the definition of a volunteer, they are always willing to participate and share their knowledge.

Ed Lesniak volunteers his time and energy and his main focus is to bring his knowledge and passion of traditional Irish music to the Ireland Tonight radio show. He is always on the hunt for new trad music and musicians. Ed supports Ireland Tonight in so many ways. He provides historical information as well as suggesting new music and new musicians to be played and from time to time creates and hosts the Ireland Tonight radio show.

Sherri Stone Weigman also volunteers her time and energy to Ireland Tonight. Sherri is always

looking for new music to share with the listeners and is always sharing her vast knowledge of the musicians and their music. She shares her knowledge in Traditional Irish music and her suggestions on who to play and what to play are always spot on. She is always in the Ireland Tonight chat room and is always very supportive of new music and musicians and shares her knowledge willingly

They are always present and always willing to go the extra mile to help. *The Ireland Tonight 2025 Radio Music Award for Volunteer of the Year goes to Ed Lesniak and Sherri Stone Weigman, (pictured)..*

Congratulations to our Ireland Tonight Radio Music Award recipients of 2025.

dooskymill@comcast.net

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(Poetry/Irish Fantasy)
John O'Donohue's Greatest Gift to Me
by Leon O'Chruadhlaich
From the darkness came light
(from The Father came mother)
From the womb to the tomb
(here comes another)!

One becomes two, the umbilical anxiety, a separate body is born (God's greatest oak in it's majesty acknowledges the acorn)
All picture-full faces are self-different, why such great each-animosity? (the bare-infant heart is for intimacy, the clothed-adult is for Ego pomposity)

The blue glittering lungs breathe in sweet air, the shiny bowels defecate (the circuitous brain slowly awakens, the flailing emotions relate)
The lean, lithe, lissome long-legs start to move us around and around (developing life's long-lasting kinship's betwixt vision and sound)

Yet the sound-sleeping soul slumbers on, in the tabernacle of memory (despite the brash squawking and awakening at Harvard and Emory)
Dear daddy-boys are maternal, dearest mommy-girls are paternal (while the transient heart remains intransigent, it's memory eternal)

Early spring is full of peach blossom freshness, reborn in the light (with late summer-sweet busoms and lingering perfumes at night)
There's buttercups and daisies, and happy-times for romance (the phantom fiddlers are flute-playing their foot-tapping dance)

Oh! But to find a lifelong-true person you can love and be free (the faithful swans together at Coole, the cooing doves in the tree)
The actor in trance, the actress in dance, yet each recognize one another (don't birds of a feather fly together like sister and brother)?

Separate individuals or all-together lovers at jam and butter-scone tea (inexplicable meetings spurring wayward tides in the serendipity sea)
'Midst the lightening flash of recognition, the moored embers glow (first a spark, then a flash, and the brave hearts will grow)
This glorious awakening of spirit allows true-promises anew (isn't it great, the mysterious Anam Cara is secretly working for you)!
The auld ancient Celts knittlingly entwine the mysterious circle together (it first must call us, then it minds us, and then shelters us forever)

The roaming heart sometimes finds in another a place that is home (it starts with a glance, an advance, an expectant lover's poem)
For love is never a burden, a confession, nor a penance 'tis true (there is far more between us than our own mutual presence can do)

We gather ourselves together, we are the drizzling mist in decline (the roaming winter-wind holds our secrets within never-telling time)
All human life is the sacred Divine, soul-filled with the Spirit of essence (endless mortal confusion suffocating the ever-dwelling Presence)

And now the purple-laden twilight mute-heralds the decay of the day (the soft daylight's bright smile hidden in the golden heart of the hay)
The hazed, swooning night-time is coming, and gravity seems lighter (the wax-waning World an undying lover, but now who's the fighter)?

This earthly life opens the portals of Heaven, but how many realize it (sometimes it's the pretty, the gifted, who self-learn 'off to despise it)
The free and the happy live their nine lives in the waterfall catchment (is all human suffering really caused by attachment)?

Overt displays of material possessions demonstrate our visible stature (but who has ever seen in hidden spirituality an invisible rapture)?
Our after-birth life opens the womb of before-life puerperium (and who looks for death closing the door on our life-ending delirium)

Long-lumbered Autumn is here, homecoming, harvest and ageing (the winding-up winter wynd's whining and chillingly raging)
But the warm-hearth remembrance and enjoyment of happy days past (always they linger, they embrace you, they longingly last)....

Invitation to Celebration of Tony O'Connell's Life at Irish Legend Restaurant April 19th



devotion to joy for people with Irish music and dance.

To help us plan the celebration, please RSVP to Joe Martin by April 12 (224-698-9252 or jmartin@gmail.com). Please include your name, how many others will come with you, and how to contact you.

Of course there will be a session! Please bring your instruments, voices, dancing shoes, and tapping feet! You'll enjoy a buffet and beverages along with music and conversations.

For questions, please contact the coordinators for the celebration: Patrice Macken at psmacken@gmail.com or Cathy Grafton at silkribbon5@yahoo.com.

We hope you can join the celebration.

Sunday, April 19, 2026, 1:00 - 3 pm
The Irish Legend Pub, 8933 Archer Ave, Willow Springs, IL
We all miss Tony. Musicians would say he brought "lift" to people wherever he went. He touched us by his kindness, humor, wisdom, and

No Irish Need Apply

By Sabina Clarke

This is a story I am telling for the first time in public—a personal experience that reflects on a smaller scale the discrimination the Irish have suffered since their arrival on our shores—the subject of books like Enter The Irish American by Edward Wakin and Irish on the Inside by Tom Hayden.

Yet, the fact that this may exist in 20th century cultural institutions whose mission is to serve all people and all ethnicities is less well known and often hidden in plain sight.

In 1994 I experienced this bias first hand in an oblique but obvious manner when I turned in a detailed proposal to the Marketing Director of The Free Library of Philadelphia for an exhibition titled "Farewell Dear Erin, The Irish in America" celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Famine, 'An Gorta Mor.'

run on city, state, and federal funds"—magically, the exhibit was given the green light to proceed.

Of course by then—and rather quickly I was seen as the instigator behind the plot to get the exhibition approved—which was accurate. I was cut out of meetings. The next reprimand was the short notice I was given to pull it all together—about three weeks lead time. That did not bother me since meetings by committee are often a waste of time. I knew what I needed to do.

The stars were aligned and the evening was a dazzling success with Timoney step-dancers, celi musicians and most memorable then and even now years later-- Joe Tobin and his bagpipers in full regalia on the front steps of The Free Library greeting guests as they arrived -- their music wafting across the Parkway on that balmy May evening

I was fortunate to find sponsors on short notice including Guinness Beer,



Harry Gamble, coordinator of football operations club relations for the NFL and Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein (photo Helen LeRoy) sometime in the 1990's

The proposal was rejected outright. I was told in a polite way that "perhaps the exhibition could happen at another time"—which was no consolation and seemed more like a platitude especially since an anniversary date is time sensitive and not something that can be arbitrarily changed. The landmark 150th anniversary could not be commemorated in 1996-- it had to be in 1995.

So I moved on from seeing The Free Library as a welcoming venue for an Irish exhibition and casually mentioned my proposal to my friend John Sweeney, the Irish American Commissioner appointed by Governor Casey. I told him what happened and suggested that perhaps an exhibition would be welcome at the Philadelphia Convention Center. Then I handed my proposal over to him at his request.

John Sweeney then proceeded to take what I had written and make a few changes so that it would not appear as if this were coming from me—and mailed it to the late Elliot Shelkrot the Director of the Free Library requesting a meeting. It was only after John Sweeney sent his letter the third time by registered mail that his request for a meeting was answered.

During the meeting when it was made clear by Irish American Commissioner John Sweeney that "This institution is

Shane's Candy and New Deck Tavern while restaurateur Mickey Cavanaugh outdid himself with a glorious sumptuous buffet.

The arrival of Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams accompanied by his close friend Paul Doris the National President of NORAID (Irish Northern Aid) was a highlight of the evening adding high drama and creating quite a buzz.

Josie Clark the wife of the Philadelphia author and Irish historian Dennis Clark was presented with a proclamation from City Hall honoring her late husband whose powerful words about the Famine were quoted on the invitation to the event: "The dimensions of the calamity can hardly be delineated by simple statistics.....it was as close to genocide as colonialism would come in the 19th century."

Originally scheduled to open in March 1995 the exhibition was delayed and held in May 1995 because The Free Library's hired Curator was out of her element and delighted to pass the torch to Professor Jack McCormack who was well-versed in Irish history.

A few weeks later Jack sent me a note closing with "Up the Revolution."

Reporter's Note: Later, I learned that there had never been an Irish themed exhibition at The Free Library of Philadelphia until May 1995. So this was another glass ceiling shattered



Across Another beautiful St. Patrick's Day in Chicago . . . and Galway, Ireland too!!!!

- 1. Trails
- 6. Beer barrel
- 9. Stoker who wrote Dracula
- 13. Military units
- 15. Clean air org., abbr.
- 16. Prefix with space
- 17. Mountain where Noah's ark landed
- 18. Slippery fish
- 19. Ski lift type, 2 words
- 20. Edible-pod vegetable, 2 words
- 22. Where one lives
- 23. Fruit with a core, like an apple
- 26. London bathroom
- 27. Ireland's Prime Minister, Simon _____
- 29. All right
- 30. Global finance group, abbr.
- 31. Fernando of Formula One
- 32. Hockey legend Bobby
- 33. Rock's ___ Leppard
- 34. Small amount
- 35. Le ___, French port city
- 38. To the ___ degree
- 40. 1965 protest march site
- 44. Hesitant sounds
- 46. Garment edge
- 48. Debt acknowledgment, abbr.
- 49. Relating to one's later years, 2 words
- 52. Compass direction, abbr.
- 53. Impressive achievement
- 54. Conversation
- 55. Growling sound
- 56. Regarding, 2 words
- 57. Lower house of the parliament of the Irish Republic
- 58. Sinn Fein leader, _____
- McDonald, 2 words
- 61. Puccini's La Bohème heroine
- 62. Touch down time perhaps, abbr.
- 63. Personal identification document, 2 words
- 67. From a certain date, 2 words
- 68. Negative votes
- 69. One who requires something
- 70. Hawaiian state bird
- 71. Trademark symbols, abbr.
- 72. Inexpensive cigar



CHICAGO GARDA PIPES AND DRUMS HAD THE HONOR OF PERFORMING FOR THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF IRELAND, MICHAEL HIGGINS, & THE CITY OF GALWAY TOO!

- 6. Lawn sign, 4 words
- 7. Fencing sword
- 8. Knight who found the Holy Grail
- 9. Post-shower garment
- 10. Born again
- 11. One of Dumas's Three Musketeers
- 12. Even more, 2 words
- 14. Unemotional
- 21. Meg Ryan film, with The
- 23. Milne's bear
- 24. Gumbo vegetable
- 25. Basketball Hall-of-Famer Harshman
- 28. Expression of sorrow
- 36. Actual, not fictional- 2 words
- 37. Therefore
- 39. Line of English kings
- 41. Falsehoods
- 42. Castle's water barrier
- 43. Car
- 45. Section or portion
- 47. Wizard of Arthurian legend
- 49. Extra person who's "out"- 2 words
- 50. Act as a link

- 51. Guardian spirit in Greek belief
- 53. Water tap
- 59. Tiny particle
- 60. Lyric poems
- 64. Fuss
- 65. Grande, in the Starbucks world, abbr.
- 66. Not wet

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70						71				72				

Strong Opening for 2026 Biennial Juried Spring Art Exhibit at Irish American Heritage Center

By Madison Casey
The Irish American Heritage Center celebrated an outstanding start to its 2026 Biennial Juried Spring Art Exhibit with a lively Opening Reception that welcomed the largest turnout for this exhibition

to date. The gallery was filled with conversation, admiration, and a true sense of community as artists, friends, and visitors gathered to celebrate the incredible range of work on display. This year's exhibition features 39 works by 26

artists from across the Chicagoland area, showcasing a wide variety of styles and mediums that highlight the creativity within the region's artistic community. The exhibit was organized and executed through the dedicated efforts of IAHC Art Program

winner was particularly difficult given the exceptional quality of the submissions. The 2026 award recipients are First Place – Christopher Guy for *An Bhean Chorcaí (The Cork Woman)* (Oil on canvas), Second Place – Colleen Milani Rest



1st Place—Christopher Guy: *An Bhean Chorcaí (The Cork Woman)* (Oil on canvas)



Second Place – Colleen Milani Rest for *Between the Salt Water and the Sea Strand* (Silkscreen)



Third Place – Ken Klopach for *Windy Wash* (Acrylic)

volunteers Kathy Kelly and Marianne Lynch, along with Madison Casey, Marketing & Programming Manager at the Irish American Heritage Center, whose collaboration helped bring the exhibition to life.

This year's exhibit was judged by Chicago-area artist Danielle Crilly, whose expressive work draws inspiration from family history, old photographs, and memories of her Central Illinois upbringing, capturing themes of beauty, nostalgia, and connection across generations. Crilly shared that selecting award

for *Between the Salt Water and the Sea Strand* (Silkscreen), and Third Place – Ken Klopach for *Windy Wash* (Acrylic). The exhibit will remain on display through April 26, when the Center will host its Closing Reception and announce the People's Choice Award, determined by votes from visitors throughout the exhibition's run.

The public is encouraged to visit the gallery during scheduled viewing hours and experience the work of these talented artists. Public viewing dates include a Hall of Fame Cocktail Reception on April 25.

The exhibition concludes with the Closing Reception on Sunday, April 26 (1-3 PM).

In addition, Kathy Kelly will lead a Spring Watercolor Painting Class Series at the IAHC from April 23 through May 23, with both morning and evening session options available.

Classes meet weekly on Thursdays and conclude with an extended Saturday workshop. Tuition for the full series is \$135 (materials not included). For schedules and registration details for both sessions, see www.irish-american.org.

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Evergreen Park's Eugene Earner: A Friend to Many in the Irish Community Passes at Ninety Three Years Young!

By Bill Figel, Neighbor
Gene Earner considered himself the wealthiest man in the world. The Evergreen Park resident measured his wealth the way the Bible taught: "good deeds will last forever" and so, likely, will references to Mr.

on the back for a job well done. For seven decades, Eugene "Gene" Earner guided his family, donated to his boyhood schools and in the twilight of his life, looked back with a smile and a hearty laugh at himself. While others his age were hoping the phone rings, Earner was handing out tee shirts in December to his own party - a kind of entrance ticket to an exclusive shindig for those who "knew Gene" well.

In 2015, St. Margaret of Scotland Parish and School Community celebrated its 140th anniversary of Catholic dedication to faith, tradition, service and excellence with "Eugene Earner as the Man of the Year."
That September night, the parish hailed Gene for helping raise more than \$500,000 orchestrating the "The Saint Patrick's Party

High School. The 1950 graduate returned to become the "Voice of Leo" as the field announcer for football and a timekeeper for basketball. For a stretch, Gene's very own granddaughters served up in orange and black for football and basketball.
Dan Stecich, president of Leo's Alumni Association has had the support of Earner since he joined the Alumni Association decades ago.
"Gene Earner was one of the great gentlemen I've come across since getting involved in the Leo Alumni group," said Stecich. "Despite the fact we are from completely different eras, the level of communication with Gene has always been seamless."
Earner was proud of every path he took (or created) that brought him into a familiar spotlight with old friends and acquaintances. All 12 Earner children graduated from Catholic schools - six sons graduated from Leo. Earner was awarded with an early call to the Leo Hall of Fame, named Leo Man of the Year and honored with Leo's Lifetime Achievement Award and the Community Service Award.
Said son Jim Earner, the business manager at Leo: "Our dad's devotion to service of both church and family motivated him to always look for ways to give back and say 'Thank You' to these schools he attended."
According to his sons, the trait that impressed them the most was his work ethic.
For more than 20 years, Earner worked a physically demanding job delivering soft drinks for the A.J. Canfield Beverage Co., many times logging 80 hours a week or more just to provide the best for his wife and twelve children.
"There was never a question



Mary and Gene Earner, 1954

Earner's kindness and deeds. Gene Earner (Center) surrounded by the Earner family in the seat in life he was most proud to take.
The many recipients of those good deeds gathered in earnest for a Memorial Visitation Saturday, March 7th, 2026 at Most Holy Redeemer Church.

Reunion Fundraiser" which gained legendary status for its attendance and monies raised to help Father Daniel Mallette keep his parish thriving on 99th Street.
As the "Go-To" guy at Most Holy Redeemer Parish in Evergreen Park, Gene put his organizational skills to use,



Many in attendance will recall Earner's spectacular annual parties at Clancy's Pizza Pub in Oak Lawn, featuring special local entertainment for a crowded room of South Siders, who had tales to spin and hands to shake.
A man of significant measure in parishes and high schools around the community, Earner's standing-room only gatherings spoke to what matters in his life - family, friends and a pat

again and again, running Saint Patrick's Day Fundraisers while coaching MHR basketball, serving as president of both the Southwest Conference for grammar schools and the Athletic Association.
Gene's attention to detail impacted thousands of young lives at the grade school level and filled uniforms at the high school level for years.
Gene's "heart of a lion" belonged to his beloved Leo

of cutting back on education when money was tight," said Jim. "It's a truly amazing accomplishment."
In September of 2015 Earner shared the award spotlight with the ultra-wealthy and legendary Richard Driehaus. The study in contrasts was not lost on most as St. Margaret of Scotland Parish and School Community celebrated its 140th anniversary of Catholic dedication to faith, tradition,

service and excellence.
Earner, known to his many friends as Gene, laughed aloud when he considered the implications of trying to match the monetary support of Driehaus, his fellow honoree and one of America's most successful fund managers, businessmen and philanthropists, as well as former chairman of Driehaus Capital Management, LLC.
Earner's longevity (Driehaus died March 9, 2021) may be linked to his massive heart. The 93 year-old was comfortable then with the path that brought him to the same podium as that of Mr. Driehaus.
Both Earner, 1946, and Driehaus, 1956, attended Saint Margaret of Scotland and both were honored for their "unconditional commitment and generosity" to the school and parish over six decades. While Driehaus' financial support has been well documented to keep the lights on at Saint Margaret's, it is quite likely Earner was the one climbing the ladder to screw in the light bulb!
Cliff Carlson, publisher of *Irish American News* remembered: "Gene was always helping the Irish and Irish entertainers get some attention that he thought was well deserved."
Official Obituary of Eugene Earner Age 93 Vet: U.S. Army (June 2, 1932 - February 24, 2026) Prepared by Robert J. Sheehy & Sons
Beloved husband of the late Donna A. Earner (nee Merritt). Loving father of James (Kathleen), Thomas (Laura), Mary (Michael) Maloney, Terrence (Karen), Patricia (Raymond) Callahan, Richard, Daniel, Colleen, Joseph (Margaret), Timothy, Brian, and the late William. Cherished grandfather of 18 and great-grandfather of 28.
Proud son of the late George and Elsie Earner. Dear brother of the late Kenneth (the late Mary) Earner. Fond uncle of many nieces and nephews. Very proud graduate of St. Margaret of Scotland Class of 1946 and Leo High School Class of 1950.
Member of Leo High School Hall of Fame and recipient of multiple alumni awards.
Former Field announcer and scorekeeper for 19 years at Leo High School,
Basketball coach and President of Most Holy Redeemer Grammar School Athletic Association, President and Co- Founder of Southwest Athletic Conference.
Player-Manager of Robbins Drugs 19th Ward Softball Champs. Longtime organizer of St. Patrick's Day Fundraisers at St. Margaret of Scotland Church and Most Holy Redeemer Church. Avid golfer. Driver for 25 years at A.J. Canfield Beverage Company and proud member of Teamsters Local 744.

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Two Irish women who touched millions through film and music also carried private battles that shaped the lives—and art—the world came to love. Broke my heart writing this.
The grande dame of Irish and British theatre, television, and cinema, Brenda Fricker has long been a familiar and much-loved presence on our screens. She appeared in well-known television dramas such as *Coronation Street* and *Casualty*, but it was her unforgettable role in *My Left Foot* that brought her worldwide recognition and an Academy Award in 1990. Many people also remember her fondly as the gentle pigeon lady in *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York*.
Despite the warmth and kindness she brought to the screen, Fricker's own life was often marked by darkness. In many ways it is remarkable that she survived the struggles of her early years and went on to enjoy such a long career. There were times when she tried to end her life, yet each time she found within herself a renewed hunger for love, joy, and adventure.
Fricker was born in 1945 and grew up in Dundrum, Dublin, Ireland. Her father, Desmond, was a journalist with *The Irish Times* and RTÉ and was often described as a quiet, distant man who spent much of his time reading. Her mother, Bina, was a schoolteacher whose temper could sometimes turn violent. Fricker later recalled that her mother would occasionally beat her. Years later doctors discovered that her mother had a brain tumour, which they believed may have contributed to her unpredictable behaviour.



also appeared on *Coronation Street*. These experiences shaped her views on justice and accountability, and she later welcomed the #MeToo movement as an important moment for survivors of abuse.
Fricker's career breakthrough came with *My Left Foot*, the story of Christy Brown, a working-class Dubliner with cerebral palsy who became an acclaimed writer and painter. The film was championed internationally by Harvey Weinstein through his company Miramax and went on to win five Academy Awards. Fricker's portrayal of Brown's devoted mother earned her the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress, making her one of Ireland's most celebrated actors.
Despite the success, grief continued to follow her. She suffered a miscarriage and later had her womb removed without her permission, meaning she would never have children. Her marriage to film director Barry Davis ended in divorce, adding to the emotional toll.
Another heartbreaking loss came when her beloved sister Gránia died from alcoholism at the age of sixty-eight. The loss affected Fricker deeply and later inspired the title of her memoir.
Through it all she continued to work. Her long list of films includes *The Field*, *Veronica Guerin*, *So I Married an Axe Murderer*, and *Cloudburst*, along with dozens of others. I have seen most of them and always admired the warmth and authenticity she brings to every role.
Now in later life, Fricker faces the challenges of age and illness. Falls, broken bones, swollen joints, and constant fatigue often keep her confined to bed. Sleep rarely comes easily, so she spends long nights watching television, particularly *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills*. With her typical Irish wit she jokes that it is "better than sex" and "better than getting drunk." Thankfully, she has not lost that famous Irish sense of humour.
Another Irish voice that touched millions around the world was Dolores O'Riordan, the unforgettable lead singer of *The Cranberries*. Dolores was also only eight years old when her childhood was shattered by sexual abuse from someone she trusted. For nearly four decades she carried that painful secret without telling her family or the world.
Music became her refuge. At eighteen she auditioned for three young musicians from Limerick, Ireland who were searching for a singer. When she began to sing they realised immediately that her voice was something extraordinary.
Their band, *The Cranberries*, soon found worldwide success. Their song *Linger* became an international hit, followed by the powerful anthem *Zombie*, which sold millions and cemented their place in music history.
But fame could not silence the pain she carried. Dolores struggled with anorexia, depression, and eventually bipolar disorder. She married tour manager Don Burton in 1994 and together they had three children whom she loved dearly. For a time motherhood brought her peace.
In 2013, at the age of forty-two, she finally spoke publicly about the abuse she had endured as a child. Her honesty resonated deeply with survivors around the world who saw their own experiences reflected in her words.
Life, however, remained turbulent. Her marriage eventually ended in divorce, and she faced several public struggles with alcohol and mental health.
On January 15, 2018, Dolores O'Riordan was found dead in a London hotel room at the age of forty-six. The coroner later ruled that she had accidentally drowned in her bathtub after drinking heavily.
The news shocked fans across the world. Radio stations immediately began playing "Linger" and "Zombie," and many reflected on how her music had helped them through their own darkest moments.
Dolores O'Riordan turned deep personal pain into songs that helped millions feel less alone. Her voice, both fragile and fierce, remains one of Ireland's most unforgettable gifts to the world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

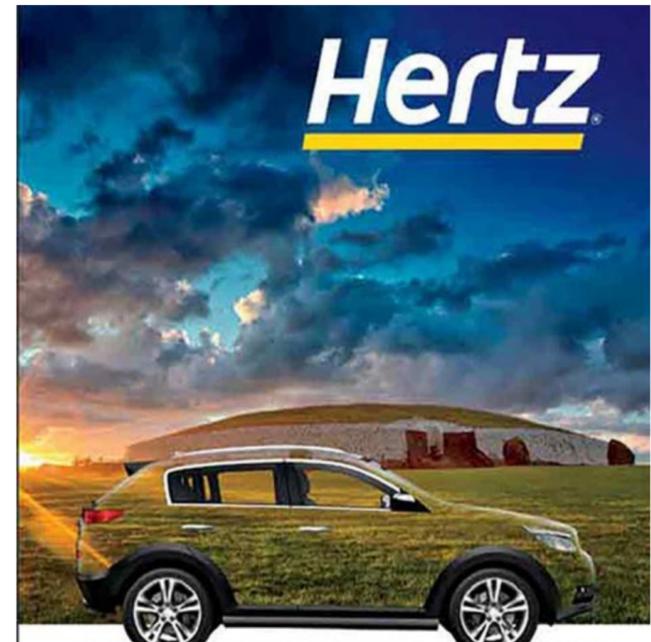
The excellent March IAN column by Conor O'Connor focuses on the 8th Amendment's prohibition of excessive punishment. This recalls the plight of David Biro, serving Life Without Parole in downstate Dixon Prison.

In 1990, at sixteen, David Biro, disturbed, and caught up in Hollywood fantasies, used a stolen FBI gun to murder his neighboring Langert family in suburban Winnetka. If David no longer poses a threat isn't it time to consider his parole? I had never heard of him or his victims prior to news of the murders, but I seek consideration for him.

Murder Biro saved me my freedom and possibly my life when the FBI framed me for his murders. I was doomed until Biro broke his FBI cover by confiding in school pals who notified police. How many other murderers have saved a life?

The FBI Agent/perpetrator tried and failed a second time to frame me and others before he was deployed to Ireland. He remained in Ireland until mission accomplished by his joint FBI/MI5 team, departing Ireland on 15Aug1998, hours after the Omagh bombing murders of twenty-nine. The Irish government know of FBI/MI5 participation in a rehearsal of that bombing but haven't acted.

There is more, but space prohibits. *Chris Fogarty*



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Happily, the deadline for Irish American News coincided with the Academy Awards ceremony in Hollywood, so we could tell you which Irish people did - and didn't - take home that golden statue.

As expected, Killarney-born actress Jessie Buckley won Best Actress for her role in Hamnet, a story that looks at the tragic inspiration behind Shakespeare's Hamlet.

The first Irishwoman to win this particular honor, she was up against Rose Byrne, Kate

Hudson, Renata Reinsve and Emma Stone, and at the end of her speech she said "Go raibh maith agaibh, slán," which translates to "Thank you, goodbye."

Another Irish voice heard in the winning speeches was that of Dubliner Richard Baneham, who was one of the winning four members of the Visual Effects Oscar for his work on Avatar: Fire and Ash. It was a unique three-peat too, as he had previously won for Avatar and Avatar: The Way of Water.

Sadly, going home empty-handed was Coleraine-born author Maggie O'Farrell, who was nominated alongside director Chloé Zhao for the Best Adapted Screenplay of O'Farrell's novel, Hamnet. That award went to Paul Thomas Anderson for One Battle After Another, for which he also won Best Director and Best Picture.

Other unlucky ones on the night were Ireland-produced comedy-drama Blue Moon (in the Original Screenplay category, and Best Supporting Actor for Ethan Hawke, which was made in association with Dublin-based Wild Atlantic Pictures, and dark sci-fi comedy Bugonia, which was produced by Dublin's Element Pictures.

It lost out in Adapted Screenplay too, Original Score and Best Picture, the latter of which meant Irish producers Ed Guiney and Andrew Lowe were out of luck tonight. Finally, Retirement directed by Dublin-based filmmaker John Kelly and voiced by Domhnall Gleeson fell at the last post in the Animated Short category.

One Battle... was the biggest winner on the night, picking up six Oscars overall, with horror thriller Sinners, which had racked up 16 nominations, taking home just four, including Best Actor for Michael B. Jordan, and Original Screenplay for Ryan Kooher.

Things had followed a similar



Paul Rudd

course at the recent BAFTA Award nominations in London, England. Buckley won there too, though also Kildare-born Pual Mescal was nominated - unsuccessfully - as Supporting Actor for his role in Hamnet.

Baneham again got the nod for his work on Avatar: Fire and Ash as well, which meant no joy for How to Train Your Dragon, which shot in the North of Ireland and nominated in the Special Visual Effects category; Terry Palmer of Northern Ireland based Hive Effects was part of their team. Finally, the short Nostalgie written and directed by Belfast's Kathryn Ferguson, lost as Best British Short Film.

There was another Irish award winner recently too - in Ireland this time.

Over in Ireland at the Dublin International Film Festival (DIFF), which ran from February 19 to March 1 with a program of 83 movies, including 17 world

premieres and 53 short films, popular comic actor Paul Rudd was one of the recipients of the festival's most prestigious honor, the Volta Award

The award, named after Ireland's first dedicated cinema, founded in 1909 by James Joyce, recognizes individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the world of film and screen culture.

Rudd has often spoken of his nostalgic ties to Ireland, often referring to it as his favorite place, despite his parents being British-born. He has a deep love for Irish culture, music, and Guinness, even building an authentic private pub named "Sullivan" in his home.

He was at the festival to support the World Premiere of his new movie, Dubliner John Carney's Power Ballad, which was screened before the last night's awards gala.

Finally, we'll finish with perhaps the best Irish movie news: there was a record-breaking production spend in 2025, with €544 million contributed to the Irish economy. That means 87 projects will be coming to the big or small screen this year, including 22 feature films, 17 documentaries, 13 TV dramas and animated series, and over 30 short films.

Hopefully that's an indicator of a good rest of the year at the movies!

POBLACHT NA hÉIREANN THE IRISH REPUBLIC

TO THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND.



LET THE IRISH HAVE THEIR SAY.

In 1916 the leaders of the Easter Rising, with the support of their "EXILED CHILDREN IN AMERICA," declared a free, sovereign and United Ireland.

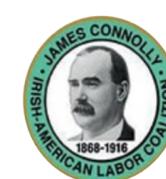
In 1998, the Good Friday Agreement was signed, with the support of Irish-America. It provides a peaceful and democratic pathway to Irish Unity.

In 2025 the Irish Parliament unanimously called on the Irish Government to plan and secure a date for the Unity Referendums provided for in the Good Friday Agreement.

This Easter, we call on the Irish government to **establish Citizens' Assemblies** to encourage the conversation on the shape of the New and United Ireland.

We urge the Irish and British governments to honor the commitment in the Good Friday Agreement and **set a date for Unity Referendums.**

IT'S TIME FOR THE PEOPLE TO HAVE THEIR SAY.



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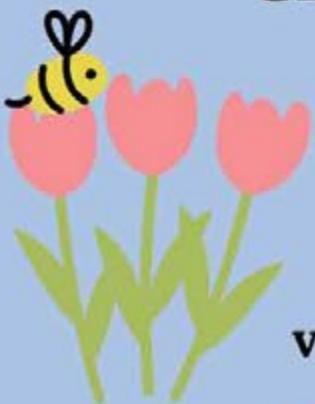
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